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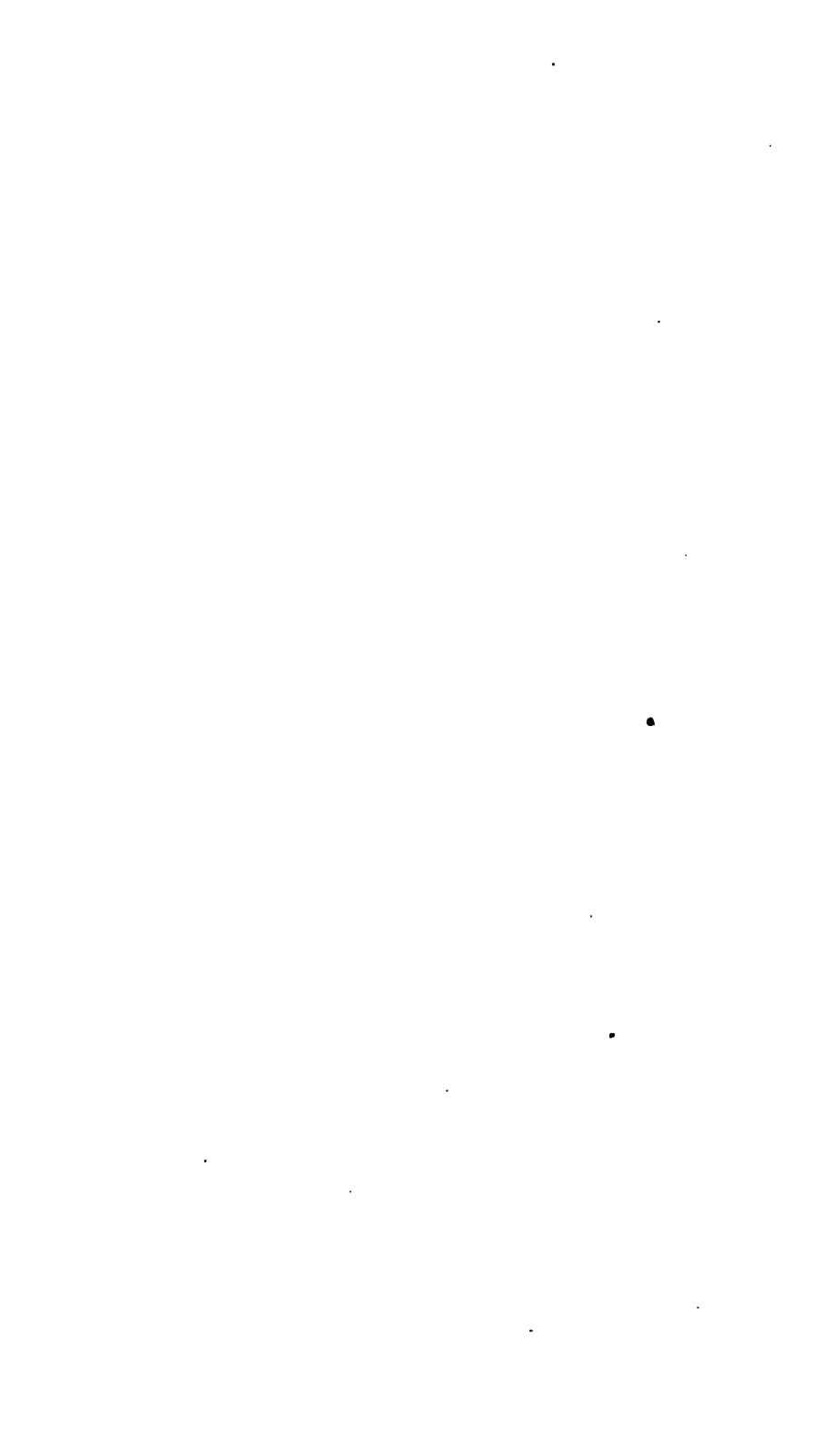
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ELLIS'S VINDICATION
OF
SOUTH SEA MISSIONS
against

KOTZEBUE'S MISREPRESENTATIONS.

— 1831 —



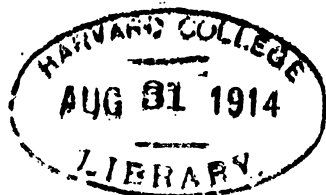
A
VINDICATION
OF THE
SOUTH SEA MISSIONS
FROM THE
Misrepresentations
OF
OTTO VON KOTZEBUE,
CAPTAIN IN THE RUSSIAN NAVY.
WITH AN
APPENDIX,
BY WILLIAM ELLIS.

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A

VINDICATION

OF THE

Missions in the South Sea Islands.

SECTION I.

Pretensions of the writer of the *New Voyage*.—Inaccuracies in geographical position of port Papeite—in the phenomenon of the tides—in remarks on natural history—and in the descriptive parts of the work.

VOYAGES and travels are favourite books; they supply facts and data for those engaged in scientific pursuits, as well as information and pleasure to the general reader. But in order to impart either the one or the other, fidelity is indispensable. Misrepresentation, whether the result of ignorance or prejudice, never fails to excite a feeling injurious to the writer. So soon as the reader perceives that an author is misleading him, confidence in his statements is destroyed, and even the parts of his work entitled

B

to belief, are received with strong suspicion. Not more applicable to the productions of the pencil than to those of the pen, is Forster's remark on the embellishments of Cook's voyage, "In representations of this kind, the chief requisite and merit is truth." But in the essential point of *accuracy*, so far as his object has led the writer of the following pages to carry his investigation, he regrets to say, that few modern books are more deficient than a work recently presented to the British public, under the title of "A New Voyage," &c.

Captain Kotzebue, son of the dramatist of that name, made, it appears, a second visit, between the years 1823 and 1826, to a number of islands in the Pacific, and to the Russian settlements in that part of the world; and has, since his return, published (in German) an account of his voyage. Copious extracts from it were received in this country soon after its publication; but so long as the original work was confined to the continent, where the sentiments of the writer were not important, it did not seem to claim particular notice. A translation, however, into English, and the commendatory notice it has received from a few of our journals, through the medium of which several most unfounded and exceptionable passages have been circulated, require that those who feel an interest in the subject, especially such as are friendly to the promotion of morals and religion in the Society or Sandwich Islands, should have the means of ascertaining the degree of credit due to

statements which come before them with pretensions so imposing.

A voyage round the world is an important enterprise—and if, in its progress, hidden dangers are disclosed; countries or islands discovered; accurate soundings of heretofore unexplored coasts or harbours given; man in new and interesting circumstances brought under our notice; and the errors of former statements corrected; it confers an honour on the country from which it is undertaken, and the individual by whom it is effected, while it renders to enlightened philosophical research invaluable aid. Such are the objects attempted in the “New Voyage;” but the slightest examination will shew, that a more complete tissue of misrepresentations and mistakes is scarcely to be found, in an equal number of pages, within the whole compass of our language.

The account of Roggewein’s voyage to the same part of the world, in 1722, notwithstanding the description of the giants of twelve feet high, is quite as correct as those which Captain Kotzebue has, in 1829, presented to the *literati* of Europe, and for which, as furnishing them with the means of judging of the reports made by the Missionaries of their own proceedings, some of the continental journalists have publicly tendered him their thanks.

Kotzebue unhesitatingly disputes the accuracy of Wallis, Byron, and Cook, in the situations assigned by these navigators to a number of islands, and contemptuously observes, how “little the intelligence

of the masters of merchant vessels is to be relied on." Whether, on such subjects, he or they be right, is not my object to inquire, excepting so far as the Missionary stations are concerned; but his readers had reason to expect that they might rely on his geographical and nautical accuracy, after having been told, in the dedication, that he received his "early education as a seaman," under the auspices of "Admiral Von Krusenstern," and "accompanied on his celebrated expedition the first Russian circumnavigator, whose name will be immortalized by his active and beneficial patronage of nautical science;" and having been told also, in the introduction, that, in performing the New Voyage, he was accompanied by professors, as naturalists, astronomers, and mineralogists, &c.; that they "were richly stored with astronomical and other scientific instruments;" and, having read in the narrative of places situated, "according to accurate astronomical observations—and groups of isles which have been laid down with the greatest possible accuracy," &c.

Notwithstanding this, one of the first objects that meets the reader's eye, on opening the book, is a map of the village and bay of Matavai, so erroneous, that it is difficult to conceive how the author, or any one who had ever been at the place, should not have perceived its inaccuracy. In this map, *Port Papeite* and *Motuuta* are placed to the eastward of Point Venus, when, in fact, both these places are situated seven miles to the south-west. Port Papeite

is “formed by coral reefs, protected against all winds,” is now generally preferred to Matavai bay, and has on its eastern side an island, called Motuuta, adorned with trees, and containing one or two houses. It was a favourite resort of the late king.

Captain Beechey gives the situation of the island and the port, and observes—

“To the *westward* of Matavai there are three good harbours, Papaoa, Taonoa, and Papeite, of which the latter is the largest and most frequented. Taonoa is four miles *west* of Matavai. Two miles to the *westward* of Taonoa there is a harbour, called by the natives Papeite, capable of containing at least thirty vessels.”*

This is the true position, and the island Motuuta lies at the entrance to Papeite. Can any maritime inaccuracy be more dangerous than the placing of an *island* and a *port* so remote from their true situation? There is a very slight curvature in the coast, but no *port* to the east of Matavai. About a mile to the eastward of the point is a small reef, with a few fragments of coral raised in one place, by the drifting of the sea above high-water mark. Port Papeite is the best harbour in the island, but a more exposed, unsafe place does not exist in the whole coast of Tahiti, than the *windward* side of Point Venus. No ship ever attempted to approach it. Yet, after a great parade of astronomical observation, in the survey of a place which had been carefully examined and accurately described fifty years before, and has long been a point at which navigators have been

* Beechey's Voyage, vol. ii. p. 648.

accustomed to try the accuracy of their instruments, and correct their longitude, Kotzebue observes—

“ The map of Matavai, and of the bay which bounds it on the north-east, completed by us with the utmost care, from trigonometrical surveys, is attached to this volume, and renders any further description of the coast it embraces unnecessary.”*

It is to be hoped that no future “ Post Captain in the Russian imperial,” or any other “ navy,” nor any of those masters of merchant vessels, whose intelligence is so “ little to be relied on,” confiding to his description, will, in the dusk, or during a fog, mistaking, as a land-mark, the little island, about a mile to the eastward of the Point, for Motuuta, attempt to sail into Port Papeiti on the *east* side of “ Cape Venus.” If they should—a calamity which had nearly befallen the Harrington, in 1804, when the captain mistook Haapaiano for Matavai—a wrecked vessel, and a crew devoured by the sharks, would probably be the result.

The changes of the ocean are not less matters of interest to the intelligent navigator, than the survey of coasts and the soundings of harbours; and of such, the tides are among the most conspicuous. To these Kotzebue has extended his observations, and with the decision which ought ever to accompany *accuracy* of investigation, lays down the following general law!

“ Every noon, the whole year round, at the moment the sun touches the meridian, the water is highest, and falls with the sinking sun till midnight.”

* New Voyage, vol. i. p. 215.

Kotzebue must have paid little attention to the tides; for, instead of continuing from noon to “*fall* with the sinking sun till midnight;” after six o’clock in the evening, they *rise*, and continue rising till midnight; so that, in the place of being highest at noon, and lowest at midnight, “the whole year round,” the tide is highest at both those times, and lowest about sunrise and sunset every day. So uniform and well understood is this ebb and flow in the sea, that throughout the islands, during the whole year, the time between evening twilight, and midnight, is designated by a term expressive of its advancing height; and the hours from midnight to the appearance of the morning star, are distinguished by terms descriptive of a corresponding fall.

After these instances of inaccuracy, there is no occasion to examine his statements relative to the height of the mountains, or the nature of the rocks; his description of the latter are as incorrect as his account of the tides. He speaks of blocks of *granite* in the neighbourhood of the lake in the interior; but the same places have been examined before and since by individuals capable of judging, particularly Messrs. Tyerman and Bennet, and from their testimony it appears that nothing like granite has been found.

The natural history of the New Voyage is in keeping with its geography; for, we are told, “Here are neither ants, musquitoes, nor any of the tormenting insects so common in tropical climates; no destructive worm, nor serpent; even

the scorpion, of which a small sort is to be met with, loses its poison." Never having seen a person who had been bitten by a scorpion, I cannot say how far the latter part of this account may be true; but centipedes are numerous and large, and their bite often occasions swelling and pain.

But how Kotzebue could remain in Tahiti from the 14th to the 24th of March, and be frequently on shore, without discovering the myriads of musquitoes and ants that swarm in every place, it is not easy to imagine. Few visitors remain a day on shore without the greatest annoyance from both, especially in native houses, adjacent to a stream, or place overgrown with bushes. So numerous are the ants, that the resident foreigners can only secure their food by having the place, on which it is deposited, surrounded with water.

Not more correct are many of the descriptive and narrative parts of these volumes. In the places of interment among the South Sea Islands, there is usually a mound of earth raised over the corpse, a curb of stones round its edge, and sometimes a smooth white piece of coral rock, rounded on the top, or a columnar fragment of basalt, fixed upright in the ground at each end, occasionally carved with the initials or name of the deceased, and the date of his death, and in general these stones are plain: yet these, Kotzebue mistook for very different things; for he speaks of "the church-yard at Matavai, with its black *wooden crosses*." No cross was ever erected in the islands, excepting one by a Spanish navigator

and some Catholic Missionaries, who remained a short time at Taiarabu, the smaller peninsular of Tahiti; and the place of interment at Matavai has fewer stones than many others. The philological observations of the author are of the same kind. All that is correctly said about the language is, though not acknowledged, copied from the grammar constructed and published by the Missionaries. His own remarks are often most ludicrous; and those in the present voyage, not more so than those in the narrative of a former voyage, to which he occasionally refers. In that account, speaking of the late king of the Sandwich Islands, he writes, "The prince, as soon as admitted to the rights of his father, receives the name of *Lio-lio*, that is, dog of all dogs, and such we really found him;"—there were "several naked soldiers, armed with muskets, who guarded the monster. The dog of all dogs at last rose very lazily, and gaped upon us." As a specimen of the ignorance manifested in the above assertion, I shall only state, that *Lio*, in the native language, does not signify a dog, but a horse. The king's name, however, was not *Lio-lio* but *Riho-riho*, and, instead of signifying dog of all dogs, or, according to Kotzebue's principle of etymology, horse of all horses, signified the dark or black heavens. Kotzebue, however, is not censurable for being unacquainted with the native language, but for writing about what he had not taken the requisite pains to understand. Of Aimata, the present queen of Tahiti, he speaks as the bride of her uncle, the prince of Ulitea: whereas she was at that time the

bride of a prince of Tahaa, who, instead of being her uncle, was but a distant relation. On marriage, Kotzebue observes—

“The kings only found an exception to this rule, (of having but one wife.) The last monarch married at the same time four daughters of a neighbouring king, and during our visit they were all living, and respected as his wives.”

This is not merely an oversight; for the same is repeated shortly afterwards, where he states that Pomare “married a daughter of the most powerful of these royal vassals; her three sisters, according to ancient custom, becoming at the same time his wives.” What will the reader think of Kotzebue’s claim to his confidence, when informed that the present queen-dowager is the only one of her family that ever was wife or concubine to Pomare; that her eldest sister only arrived in Tahiti in 1815, when she came on a visit to her sister, who was at this time Pomare’s queen; that the remaining two resided in Huahine when I left it in 1824; one the wife of an inferior chief, and the other married to a member of the reigning family in that island.

Kotzebue was but ill qualified to accomplish what he has attempted in his account of the people, an English seaman having been his only interpreter at Tahiti; and in the Sandwich Islands, an individual who declared it “impossible to translate” the words of the regent, “as no other language would express such depth of thought, united with such ardent feeling;” but Kotzebue’s own imagination appears to have supplied all defects.

SECTION II.

Reasons for noticing the New Voyage.—Exposure of the fabulous account of king Tajo, and the young hero Pomare.—Refutation of the charge against the Missionaries of introducing Christianity by force, and instigating a “bloody persecution.”—Early history of the Mission in Tahiti.—Evidence of Turnbull, and the first Missionaries.—Inaccuracy of Kotzebue’s quotation from Forster.—True cause of depopulation.

KOTZEBUE’S ship was *ten days* in Matavai, and he was never farther from his ship than the shores of the bay. Some of his companions once walked over One-Tree Hill to Pare, and went up to the lake in the interior. All were totally ignorant of the native language; yet he professes to furnish a history of the people, an account of their ancient usages, institutions, past and present character, &c., extending to above one hundred pages. Had his mis-statements been confined to matters of this kind, however numerous they might have been, they would have remained unnoticed, but the account is made the vehicle of one of the most virulent and malicious, as well as unfounded, attacks upon the introduction and influence of Christianity in those islands, which it has yet had to endure. To this point it is my object to direct the attention of the reader; for to the others, which have no relation to

that topic, I should not have referred, further than to afford the reader the means of estimating the degree of credit to which the author is entitled, on subjects so much more beyond his comprehension. This sagacious observer of men and things—who, after claiming the confidence of his readers for his accuracy, in the recitals of ten days, falls into as many egregious blunders, even on points within the immediate range of his own profession, as would serve to stamp discredit on his whole narrative—is the individual on whose discrimination the European community is asked to repose its judgment, as to the actual condition, morally and socially, of a people emerging from barbarism, and of the tenor and effects of a religion, to the genius of which he shews himself to be a total stranger, while to its influence on the minds of the people, whom he ungenerously tries to disgrace in the opinion of his readers, he owed the preservation of his property, and his personal safety, when tarrying amongst them.

This disingenuousness it is important to expose, as several of the passages which injuriously misrepresent the conduct of the Missionaries, have been circulated in some of our own journals. It is no small matter of regret, that the gentlemen conducting these publications should, in a subject so highly interesting to the cause of Christianity, and to the honour of their country, in one of its most philanthropic undertakings, have

suffered themselves to render their works the vehicles of the prejudice of this jealous foreigner, especially, after perusing (as it may be presumed they have done) the more authentic statements of eminent officers, in the navies of their own government, and that of France, who have given their testimony upon the same subject. Little indeed is to be expected, in favour of any thing that is English, from the candour of a writer who does not hesitate to injure the memory of one justly designated, by a writer whom Kotzebue seems fond of quoting, the "greatest navigator of his time." Kotzebue speaks of "the thoughtless severity of Cook, who was always judge in his own cause, and suffered himself to be hurried into unjustifiable acts of violence." And observes, "had he been a philanthropist, as well as a great navigator, he would not have lost his life at O Wahi." He pretends to give an account of the death of Captain Cook, *as he received it*, from Karaimoku, the late regent, who, Kotzebue says, "witnessed these circumstances, and related them to me." The former part of this assertion is not true: *I have heard* Karaimoku declare, when he has been referred to on the subject, that *he was not* present, but in another island (Maui) at the time. Kotzebue has the temerity further to state, "that Cook's fate, however lamentable, was not entirely undeserved;" and introduces from a translation into German, of "Cook's Voyages," by Forster, quotations such as the following :—

“The captain’s (Cook’s) character is not the same now as formerly: his head seems to have been turned.”—“Cook, on his first voyage, had had with him Messrs. Banks and Solander, both lovers of art and science; on the second voyage I and my son were his companions;—in our presence, respect for his own character restrained him: our mode of thinking, our principles and manners, influenced his, and prevented his treating the poor harmless South Sea Islanders with cruelty. But having, in his last voyage, no other witnesses of his actions than such as were entirely under his command, he forgot what he owed to his own great name, and was guilty in many instances of extreme cruelty.”*

Passages such as these furnish proof of the means by which slander is propagated through the continental press; and it ought to put our own writers on their guard against placing an implicit reliance on charges resting on such authorities, where the character of any thing English is the subject of animadversion.

The statement itself appears as unjust as unwarranted. It will add but little to Kotzebue’s own celebrity, thus to disparage a name which, however it may be regarded by foreigners, will ever be honoured by Englishmen, and ought to be protected by those on whom devolves the direction of public opinion.

In another place, speaking of a report, that the visit of the late king of Hawaii, to this country, was to implore the assistance of England against the seizure of the Sandwich Islands by Russia, Kotzebue observes—

* New Voyage, vol. ii. p. 185.

“ But from the air of protection which England has for a long time past assumed towards these Islands, it seems to me that she herself secretly harbours such a design, and probably only waits a favourable opportunity for its execution.”—Vol. ii. p. 25.

An insinuation of this kind comes with good grace, indeed, from Captain Kotzebue, when it is recollected, that a subject of Russia *did build a fort on one island*; and did “ put up the Russian flag, with the declaration, *I take possession of the Island,*” in another; from which he and his Russian companions were only reluctantly driven by the order of the chiefs, and the attitude of determined resistance assumed by the people.

Candour towards *his* government will, I presume, oblige us, to believe the gloss which he now wishes to throw over the transaction, in calling it—

“ The attempt of the insane Dr. Scheffer, in 1816, without the knowledge of our government, to raise the island of Tuai against Tameamea, in the hope of annexing it to the empire of Russia;”

and declaring, that “ the absurd design was entirely discountenanced by the Emperor Alexander.”

It is evident, from the following paragraph, that Kotzebue wishes to shrink from the responsibility of his own statement, as he observes—

“ I am, however, far from desiring to maintain this opinion, as founded on any sufficient grounds.”

Yet it is possible, from the terms in which he speaks of the influence of the English in the South Sea Islands, that *speculations* might exist in his mind

corresponding with those expressed on the settlement of the Spanish Missions in California, in reference to which he says—

“ It is a great pity we were not beforehand with them;” and “ I confess I could not help *speculating* upon the benefit this country would derive from becoming a province of our powerful empire, and how useful it would prove to Russia.”

After these palpable indications of prejudice against the English government and nation, it is not a little to be lamented that the journals of our own country should have given circulation to the statements in which they appear. Nor is it easy to account for the reception of other parts of his work on the continent, the comments of the journalists there, and the comparisons they institute between the Mission in Tahiti and those of Paraguay or California, where, they observe, “ the population is already diminished two-thirds, and the Christians more dreaded than the wolves of the wood,” unless the remarks of the younger Forster be regarded as affording explanation :—

“ The philosophers of the present age, to obviate the seeming contradictions in the accounts of different travellers, have been at the trouble to select certain authors in whom they have placed confidence, and rejected as fabulous the assertions of all the rest. Without being competent judges of the subject, they have assumed a few circumstances as facts ; and, wresting even those to suit their own systems, have built a superstructure which pleases at a distance, but, upon nearer examination, partakes of the illusive nature of a dream.”*

* I. R. Forster's Obs. pref. p. xi.

I now turn to the portion of Kotzebue's work which is the immediate subject of the following remarks; and, after the specimen afforded, of the unfriendly eye with which he views the enterprises of the English in his own profession, the reader will be prepared to fix a just estimate on the value of his opinions on a subject, to which he has evidently brought no capacity of judging.

Seldom have Christian men, in their efforts to introduce a religion, which, in its first announcement to any people, as well as in its nature and tendency, speaks peace on earth, and good-will towards men, had to meet allegations equal to those contained in the following passages :—*

“ After many fruitless efforts, some English Missionaries succeeded *at length*, in the year 1797, in introducing what they called Christianity into Tahiti, and even in gaining over to their doctrine the king Tajo, who then governed the whole island in peace and tranquillity. This conversion was a spark thrown into a powder magazine, and was followed by a fearful explosion. The new religion was introduced *by force*. The maraes, as well as every memorial of the deities formerly worshipped, were suddenly destroyed by order of the king. Whoever would not *instantly* believe the new doctrine *was put to death*. With the zeal for making proselytes, the *rage of tigers* took possession of a people once so gentle. *Streams of blood flowed—whole races were exterminated*; many resolutely met the death they preferred, to the renunciation of their ancient faith. Some few escaped by flight to the recesses of the lofty

* On comparing the quotations, here inserted, with the original, it has been found necessary to make several deviations from the English translation.

mountains, where they still live in seclusion, faithful to the gods of their ancestors.

“ Ambition associated itself as usual to fanaticism. King Tajo, not content with seeing, in the remains of his people, none but professors of the new faith, resolved on making conquests, that he might force it on the other Society Islands. He had already succeeded with most of them, when a young hero, Pomareh, king of the little island of Tabua, took the field against him. What he wanted in numbers, was supplied by his unexampled valour, and his superiority in the art of war.

“ He subdued one island after another, and at last Tahaiti itself, and, having captured its king, *offered the zealot murderer of his innocent subjects as a sacrifice to their manes*. Subsequently, he subjected to his sceptre all the islands which had hitherto remained independent, and, as sovereign of the whole archipelago took up his residence in Tahaiti. He left to the conquered kings the government of their islands, requiring from them a yearly tribute in pigs and fruit.

“ Peace was thus restored to Tahaiti, and the whole archipelago. Pomareh was a wise and mild ruler. He left his subjects undisturbed in their new religion, although he did not profess it himself. The Missionaries, limited to their powers of persuasion only, found, however, means to retain the people in their doctrine, so that the refugees of the mountains preferred remaining in their retreats, to finding themselves objects of hatred and contempt amongst their countrymen. At length, Pomareh himself, with his whole family, yielded to the arguments of the Missionary Nott, allowed himself to be baptized, and died as a Christian in the prime of life, in consequence of an immoderate indulgence in the spirituous liquors which he had obtained from the ships of his new brethren.

“ True genuine Christianity, and a liberal government, might have soon given to this people, endowed by nature with the seeds of every social virtue, a rank among civilized nations. Under such a blessed influence, the arts and sciences would

have taken root, the intellect of the people would have soon expanded, and a just estimation of all that is good, beautiful, and eternally true, would have refined their manners, and enobled their hearts. Europe would soon have admired, perhaps have envied, Tahiti : but the religion taught by the Missionaries is not true Christianity, though it *partially* comprehends some of its dogmas, *but ill understood*, even by the teachers themselves. A religion, the introduction of which requires force, cannot, for this very reason, be genuine Christianity.

“ It (the religion taught by the Missionaries) has put an end to human sacrifices, *but infinitely many more human beings have been sacrificed to it, than ever were to their heathen gods.*

“ The elder Forster estimated, as we have already mentioned, the population of Tahiti at one hundred and thirty thousand souls *at least*. Allowing that he over-calculated by even as much as fifty thousand, still eighty thousand remained : and as the present population exceeds not eight thousand, so nine-tenths must have disappeared. Ardent spirits, introduced by the Europeans and Americans, and the diseases with which these nations have infected the natives, may indeed have much increased the mortality ; but a number of islands in the South Seas are visited by them, where no diminution of population is observed. There is no account extant that small-pox, or the plague, ever raged here ; it was therefore the bloody introduction of the religion of the Missionaries (called, by Kotzebue’s translator, *the bloody persecution instigated by the Missionaries*) which performed the office of the most desolating infections. I am ready to believe that these good people were themselves shocked at the consequences of their proselytism, but they have completely consoled themselves,” &c.*

In the last number of the Westminster Review, the New Voyage is noticed, several quotations are made, and Kotzebue’s account of the present state of the

* New Voyage, vol. i. p. 159—169.

people, and the progress of the Missionaries among them, is described as "remarkable in a high degree." The writer of the notice appears to be totally unacquainted with the recent history of the people, and the very situation of the island ; for, throughout the whole article, Tahaiti is represented as among the " Friendly Islands," though, in fact, it is nearly as far from them as Westminster is from St. Petersburg.

Besides unfriendly quotations, the substance of the preceding paragraphs from the *New Voyage*, appears as illustrating what the writer calls the " experiment which has been there tried, and is of exceeding importance, both in a religious and moral point of view." The writer states, " things are sadly changed since he (Captain Cook) left it. It is no longer the paradise on earth which fills the mind of the youthful reader with visions of blissful enjoyment," &c. Then follows the substance of the foregoing paragraphs from Kotzebue.

The statements, which appear in pages 301 and 303 of the *Westminster Review*, are not given as quotations from Kotzebue's work; but the British public is required to receive them on the veracity of the reviewer, or the editor. They refer not to matters of opinion, but to facts which must, in the opinion of those who confide in the writer, render the parties to whom they refer, infamous in no ordinary degree. Were they true, no apology could be offered; but that they are entirely unfounded, the succeeding pages will satisfactorily prove; and I cannot but hope, that

the Editor of the Review, who has been deceived by his author, will, even in justice to his own reputation, furnish such explanations to his readers, whom he cannot but regret to have misled, as shall at least afford some reparation to the individuals whose reputation has been so seriously injured.

Had the conduct of the Missionaries in Tahiti been as represented in the passages already quoted, it could not have been left for Kotzebue, thirty years afterwards, to make the painful disclosure to the world; the virtue of their own country would have exposed them, and they would have been deservedly held up to the perpetual execration of mankind: but the whole statement is a mere fabrication of the writer, or of his informant, and is destitute of truth in every particular. Kotzebue says,

“After many fruitless efforts, some English Missionaries succeeded at length, in 1797, in introducing what they called Christianity, and gaining over the king Tajo, who governed the whole island.”

Now, it is well known that no ship with English Missionaries approached the shores of Tahiti until 1797,* when the first British Missionaries arrived. That Christianity was not established at this period, nor by force at any time, might be proved by a variety of testimonies: the following facts will be sufficient. Turnbull, who, in 1803, six years after 1797, attended one of the religious services held by the Missionaries, at which the king and chiefs were present, thus describes it:—

* Narrative of the Duff's Voyage, p. 62.

“ Their congregation might amount to about fifty. Upon its conclusion, I demanded of Otoo (who had sent for him) what he wanted with me. He asked me, upon the departure of the Missionaries, whether it was all true as they had preached. I replied in the affirmative, that it was strictly so, according to my own belief, and that of all the wiser and better part of my countrymen. He demanded of me where Jehovah lived ; I pointed to the heavens. He said he did not believe it. His brother was, if possible, still worse. Edeah was looking on, with a kind of haughty and disdainful indifference. They said it was all *havery*, or falsehood.”*

No native became a convert till 1812. There are men living in the mountainous parts of Tahiti, whither they fled in times prior to the introduction of Christianity; therefore, not to avoid the Christians, and live faithful to the gods of their ancestors; but, as some, whom I have seen and conversed with, have declared—to avoid being offered in sacrifice to their idols. As to King Tajo’s invading the Society Islands, there is no account among the people of any king of Tahiti ever attempting it.

Kotzebue’s accuracy in proper names, we have already noticed. Whom he can mean by king Tajo, or Taio, it is impossible to conjecture, as there never was, as far as we know, a king of any such name ; and if the name be fictitious, it is most inappropriate, as taio, in the language of Tahiti, signifies a friend.

The romance about the young hero Pomare, king of the little island Tabua, entering the field

* Turnbull’s Voyage, vol. iii. p. 10.

against this fanatical and ambitious Tajo, taking at last Tahiti itself, and offering the “zealot-murderer of his innocent subjects as a sacrifice to their manes,” is of the same kind. There is no island of that name known in the Pacific. The young hero, if Kotzebue means Pomare II., as he must do, by stating that he “yielded to the arguments of the Missionary Nott, allowed himself to be baptized, and died a Christian,” was born in Tahiti, of which island, at the time of his birth, his father was king. Captain Bligh declares he saw him, viz. the late Pomare, then called Otoo, in 1788, when he appeared about six years old.* He and his father were both at Matavai when Captain Wilson arrived, in 1797, and the former was then about eighteen years of age; and Captain Scott, of the Colonial Government’s ship Porpoise, saw him in 1800. He derived his name Pomare from his father, who governed the island before him. This king, viz. the late Pomare’s immediate predecessor, instead of being sacrificed by the *young hero*, died suddenly as he was very quietly proceeding from the shore of Pare, towards the Dart, a ship then leaving the harbour. Many idolatrous ceremonies were performed on the occasion of his decease; and the annexed extract, published before Kotzebue’s “Voyage” appeared, describes his views on the subject of religion :—

“To the favour of the gods he considered himself indebted for the aggrandizement of his person and family; and if the

* Bligh’s Voyage, p. 75.

Missionaries would have allowed the claims of Oro, or Tane, to have been equal to those which they preferred for Jehovah, or Jesus Christ, Pomare would readily have admitted them; but when required to renounce the idols of his ancestors, and to acknowledge Jehovah alone as God, he rejected their message. He was the principal support of the idolatry of his country.”—
“Teu, his father, was a Tahitian prince; his mother was a native of Raiatea; he was born in the district of Pare; and at the time of his death, which took place on the 3d of September, 1803, was between fifty and sixty years of age.” *

Turnbull, who was a resident at Tahiti at the time, and has given an account of the event in his published narrative, remarks, that his death was by most of the natives imputed to the anger of the gods; and that, under this impression, they stretched a human victim, which had been slain for a sacrifice, prostrate beneath his dead body, “in hopes of appeasing the offended deity.†” This evidence is conclusive of their not being Christians in 1803.

So far from having been converted to Christianity, the predecessor of the Pomare, to whom Kotzebue refers, died as zealous a pagan as had ever lived. He bequeathed his idols to his son and successor, by whom they were worshipped, until idolatry was abolished in 1815, when they were given up, as the annexed passage, in a translation of a letter from Pomare himself to the Missionaries, will shew:

“Friends, I wish you to send those idols to Britane, for the Missionary Society, that they may know the likeness of the gods

* Polynesian Researches, vol. i. p. 124.

† Turnbull's Voyage, vol. ii. p. 231.

that Tahiti worshipped ; *those were my own idols*, belonging to our family, from the time of Taaroa Manahune, even to Vairaatoa, and when he died he left them with me. And now having been made acquainted with the true God, with Jehovah—he is my God. And when this body of mine shall be dissolved in death, may the Three-One save me ; this is my shelter, my close hiding-place. *I feel pleasure and satisfaction in my mind ; I rejoice*, I praise Jehovah, that he hath made known his word unto me.”

After describing the names of the principal idols, he observes—

“ If you think proper, you may burn them all in the fire, or, if you like, send them to your country, for the inspection of Europe, that they may satisfy their curiosity, and know Tahiti’s foolish gods.”

This letter was dated, “ Tahite Motuuta, February 18th, 1816,” it appeared in the Report of the Missionary Society for 1818, and in other publications.

But for the apparent credence given in some quarters to the malicious charges brought against the Missionaries, of introducing Christianity by force, and instigating “ the bloody persecution which performed the office of a desolating infection ;” establishing their religion by means, in which “ the rage of tigers was infused ; streams of blood flowed ; whole races were exterminated ;” in which “ infinitely more human beings have been actually sacrificed than ever were to their heathen gods ;” and in consequence of which “ nine-tenths of the population disappeared ;” I should not have supposed that, in the present day,

there had been individuals who could have been imposed upon by such nursery tales.

By what means a few unarmed men, encumbered with their wives and children, dependent at every moment for their lives upon the disposition of the inhabitants towards them, could, without offering any temporal advantage whatever, so far influence the king of the island and his adherents, to adopt a system of religion opposed to all their hereditary opinions and habits, as to induce them thus to engage in its propagation, and the others to submit to its influence, I leave it to for the disciples of Kotzebue's school of philosophy to point out.

But foolish as the charge is, I wish it could be supposed to have been made under the momentary influence of passion. No: it is deliberately penned, and, with slight variations, successively repeated. That the introduction or establishment of Christianity was by force, is self-refuted. The Missionaries, as their own journals, written and published long before Captain Kotzebue visited the islands, shew, were the daily sport of native violence and rapacity. Scarcely twelve months after their landing, when performing an act of friendship for the captain of a ship at anchor in Matavai, four of them were seized, stripped, and treated with great barbarity; shortly afterwards, a number left the island for New South Wales, and those who remained were often placed in circumstances of great distress. Turnbull, who resided many months on the island, some years after

their arrival, gives a correct account of their situation, when he states—

“ From the first arrival of the Missionaries, they were exposed to the greatest hardships and dangers from their own countrymen. Some desperadoes of Europe, at that time residing among the natives, instead of assisting these worthy men in their forlorn situation, took a malicious pleasure in counteracting their efforts on all occasions, misrepresenting their views, and endeavouring to stir up the natives to outrage and violence.”*

“ They (viz. the Missionaries,) apparently lived together in the greatest love and harmony, and all of them present an example of industry. Their situation, however, is by no means so comfortable as many of our countrymen may be inclined to imagine. Their life is a life of contest, hardship, and disappointment; like their holy Master, they have to preach to the deaf, and exhibit their works to the blind.”†

These hardships they bore, but, ten years afterwards, were obliged to fly, in consequence of the desolating wars which raged between Pomare and the chiefs of Tahiti, both parties being still pagans, slaughtering each other! the victors offering the vanquished in sacrifice to their gods. The notices of these pagan barbarities in the Missionary Journals, and other early accounts, are frequent: the following, from a great number, serve to shew that the cause of bloodshed, subsequent to 1797, was very different from what Kotzébue has invented; and exhibit causes for the flight to the mountains; of some of the wretched inhabitants, the very opposite to those which he has assigned, viz., a desire to avoid Christianity, and

* Turnbull's Voy. vol. ii. p. 86. † Ibid. i. p. 165.

“live faithful to the gods of their ancestors.” Under date of October 16th, 1799, the Missionaries write :—

“ Heard that five human sacrifices have, within a few days, been brought over from Eimeo ; also, that many of the inhabitants of Pare have *fled to the mountains, to avoid being seized for human sacrifices.*”

October 22d.—“ Heard that Otoo, &c. continue, to the westward, making prayers over the human sacrifices they have been offering up ; the number of which is increased to ten, if not more.—November 13th. This morning, a human sacrifice was brought into this district, from Hapyano, which they were taking to Pomare. Two of the brethren saw the corpse ; it was laid upon a long basket of cocoa-nut leaves ; the head was much bruised with stones. It appears Pomare is sending to every district of the greater peninsula, which is in his interest, to send him a human sacrifice.”

Turnbull’s account, which is substantiated by two of the Missionaries, who slept the same night in the house of the chief, and, in the evening, saw the man who, before morning, was murdered, will shew the manner in which victims were often procured.

“ One of the confidants of Otoo was advanced to the command of a district, at some distance from Matavai. This man had been often importuned for a human victim, and, as often, excused himself by the difficulty of finding any suitable object. This passed for a time, but the king, or rather Pomarrie, at length insisted on his compliance. This wretch, now put to his shifts, and, apprehensive of losing the smiles of his benefactor, found he could defer it no longer. He therefore sent a message, requesting the immediate visit of a near relation. The unsuspecting man obeyed, and was received with the greatest friendship and cordiality by the treacherous chief, so that he departed enraptured with his reception. But he had no sooner left the house, than the villain gave orders that one of his trusty agents should follow him, and,

watching his opportunity, should kill him, when off his guard. This was accordingly done, when the unsuspecting man was walking down to the beach. The body was then laid out in a long basket made of cocoa-nut leaves, and conveyed past our door. The natives in our yard beheld it with the most perfect apathy, and requested me to look at it as it passed; but I expressed my abhorrence of such an outrage to humanity, and refused to go out of my doors till it had proceeded beyond my sight.”*

While these barbarities for the support of that “ancient faith,” so respectfully spoken of by Capt. Kotzebue, and the cruelties and murderous wars with which they were associated, were rapidly annihilating the race,—the Missionaries, so far from employing force, or instigating “bloody persecution,” were the mediators between the murderers and their victims: they, and they alone, interposed an intercession, which, though feeble, often arrested the progress of violence which was reducing the country to a state of desolation. The first journey they undertook, in a little more than a week after the Duff’s departure, was to Papara, a distant part of the island, “to dissuade the chiefs from so inhuman a practice as that of offering human sacrifices.” Their first public appeal to the rulers of the nation was prompted by this motive, and directed to this end—

“To inform Pomare, the chiefs, and people, of the object of our mission to the island, the customs of countries where human sacrifices were abolished; and earnestly to entreat the chiefs to use their utmost endeavours to put a stop to the inhuman custom of infant-killing, which is so great an evil in the

* Turnbull’s Voy. vol. iii. p. 100.

sight of God, and also tends to the extirpating of their race. To further the design of saving the infants, to promise to build a house for the reception of such children as may be saved by the Arêeoies, and to instruct them in building vessels, and other arts."

The very residence of the Missionary in the island furnished an asylum for those who were the objects of pagan cruelty. The following instance recorded in the journal of the deputation illustrates this:—

"A poor fellow, who had committed an offence that rendered him liable to be sacrificed, being aware of his danger, sought sanctuary on the premises of one of the Missionaries; and, so long as he remained within the enclosure, was safe. Several months had elapsed, and the affair seemed forgotten, when the man ventured forth again. Within three days he was caught, and murdered. His body was carried to the marae in a basket, called haape, such as the priest used in presenting human sacrifices (after they had been slain at a distance) to the atrocious idols."*

Under date of November 1st, 1798, the Missionaries write:—

"The war against Atehuru is still in agitation; we pray for peace, and for the introduction of the gospel of peace among the natives, and our preparation for preaching it."

"November 29th.—"Great preparation for war; we cease not to intercede for peace. Whether it will be war or peace, we read a compendium of our duty in Psalm xlv. 8, 'Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen.'"

While these quotations manifest the feelings and the true conduct of those who are charged with having exterminated the majority of the people, and

* Journal of Messrs. Tyerman and Bennet, vol. i. p. 121.

rendered the remainder worse than they were before—the following passage will prove, with equal distinctness, what was the true origin of the native wars. In describing a council held by the king, under date April 1st, 1802, the Missionaries relate :—

“ The king, after the people of Attahooroo had refused to give up Ooro, (their great idol) who was in their possession, spoke himself, and demanded him. He was answered immediately, by their orators, in the negative. Pomare then addressed himself to his son, the king, in behalf of the Attahooroo people, and requested him to yield to them, and suffer them to keep the god. The king then directed his speech again to the Attahooroo people, and said it should not be as his father had requested, and insisted upon their delivering up the god directly; but he was still refused. After asking a long time, he rose up in anger, and ordered all his party that were present to draw back. Immediately, the cloth upon the canoes was plundered, and a number of the king's people took hold of Ooro, and rescued him from the hands of the Attahooroo people, and ran to the sea-side.”

The outrage thus committed caused one of the most destructive and protracted wars that has been known in Tahiti, and ultimately obliged the Missionaries to quit the island.

On their return, in 1812, from this expulsion, and after Christianity was received by Pomare and some of the people, persecution, sometimes to a murderous extent, raged in the islands: individuals were deprived of their property and lands, driven as outcasts from society, hunted in the mountains, and some of them offered in sacrifice; but the Christians were themselves the *victims*, not the *authors* or instruments, of these persecutions; they sustained them with

fortitude, and, as opportunity offered, requited them with kindness. When the Christian religion spread more extensively, in 1815 *force was used*—not by the Christians, to promote it, but by the pagans, to annihilate it. The following accounts have long been given to the public, and I prefer them to those in the *Polynesian Researches*, as the period of their publication will show that, when they were given, no such charges as those which Kotzebue has preferred could be anticipated.—Under date of September 6th, 1815, referring to the persecution of the pagans, the Missionaries write:—

“The idolatrous chiefs of Pare, and the chief of Hapaiano, got some of the chiefs of Matavai to join them in a conspiracy against the *Bure Atua*, (or Christians,) and it was proposed to cut them off entirely, root and branch. But, thinking themselves unequal to the task, those of the new religion being already formidable, both in number and respectability, they acquainted the chiefs of Atahuru and Papara with their views, and invited them to join. These, though their ancient rivals and enemies, came most readily into the measure, and prepared to unite with them without delay; and, on the night of July 7th, these combined forces were to fall, without mercy, on those who had renounced heathenism, and exterminate them; but some of the parties being rather dilatory, and secret intelligence having been conveyed to the party whose ruin was determined upon, and they happening to be that evening, most of them, together by the sea-side, they quickly got on board their canoes, and set sail for Eimeo, where they arrived, and were safely landed the following morning. The disappointed chiefs then quarrelled among themselves; and the Atahuruans, &c. fell upon the Porionu party, that is, upon the party who had invited them. They fought; the Porionu party were defeated, and a number of

men killed, among whom was one of their principal chiefs, and a promoter of the war. The Atahuruans, and those of Papara, being joined by Taiarabu, burnt and plundered the whole of the north-east part of Taheiti, from the borders of Atehuru to the isthmus. The question about religion seemed quite forgotten; and the different parties fought to revenge old quarrels, that happened many years ago. Some time after, the Taiarabu people quarrelled with those of Papara and Atehuru, fought with them, but were defeated and driven to the mountains."

Thus it is evident, that nearly twenty years after the period at which Kotzebue states this feeble band of Missionaries had, by force, subjugated the population of the island to their own religious system, or occasioned the destruction of those who opposed themselves—they themselves, and the sovereign of the island, who had been induced by gentle means to profess Christianity, were put in peril of their lives by the inveterate rancour and treachery of the abettors of the ancient idolatry. War ensued; but the aggression was on the side of those whom Kotzebue represents as the aggrieved. This will appear in the following account of the only war that has occurred since any of the people have embraced Christianity. It is given in a letter from the Missionaries, dated August 13th, 1816, when, having described the issue of the attack of the pagans on the Christians, they proceed:—

"This state of things continued till sabbath-day, November 12th, 1815, when the heathen party, taking advantage of the day, and of the time when the king and all the people were assembled for worship, made a furious, sudden, and unexpected

assault, thinking they could, at such time, easily throw the whole into confusion. They approached with confidence, their prophet having assured them of an easy victory. In this, however, they were mistaken. We had warned our people, before they went to Tahiti, of the probability of such a stratagem being practised, should a war take place; in consequence of which, they attended worship under arms; and, though at first they were thrown into some confusion, they soon formed for repelling the assailants: the engagement became warm and furious, and several fell on both sides.

“ Soon after the commencement of the engagement, *Upufara*, the chief of Papara, (the principal man on the side of the idolaters,) was killed: this, when known, threw the whole of his party into confusion, and Pomare’s party quickly gained a complete victory. The vanquished were treated with great lenity and moderation; and Pomare gave strict orders that they should not be pursued, and that the women and children should be well treated. This was complied with; not a woman or child was hurt; nor was the property of the vanquished plundered.

“ After this, *Pomare* was, by universal consent, restored to his former government of Tahiti and its dependencies; since which, he has constituted as chiefs in the several districts, some who had for a long time made a public profession of Christianity, and had, for many months, attended the means of instruction with us at Eimeo.

“ In consequence of these events, idolatry was entirely abolished, both at Tahiti and Eimeo; and we had the great, but formerly unexpected, satisfaction of being able to say, that Tahiti and Eimeo, together with the small islands of Tapuamanu and Tetaroa, are now altogether, in profession, *Christian* Islands. The gods are destroyed; the maraes demolished; human sacrifices and infant murder, we hope, for ever abolished; and the people, every where, calling upon us to come and teach them.”

These quotations, written at the time, by individuals on the spot, and who could have no inducement to attempt to deceive, will satisfy every candid mind, that Christianity was not introduced to Tahiti by force, and will fully exonerate the Missionaries from the malicious accusation brought against them.

The other part of the charge, the murder of above 70,000 of the inhabitants, already quoted; viz. reducing them from 130,000, or, at least, from 80,000 to 8,000, is not less destitute of foundation. In accounting for this diminution, Kotzebue says :—

“ There is no account extant that small-pox, or the plague, ever raged here; it was therefore the bloody introduction of the religion of the Missionaries, which performed the office of the most desolating infections. I am ready to believe, that these good people were themselves shocked at the consequences of their proselytism; but they have completely consoled themselves,” &c.

Thus coolly is a passage, which it might have grieved the heart of a pagan to write, given by this reckless recorder of his own fictions, to become, so far as his trust-worthiness is admitted, a matter of future history—a passage which conveys a libel not only on a body of upright and benevolent men, but on the country to which they belong, and the divine religion which they professed to propagate! The virulence of the poison is ill concealed by the sweetening epithet “good,” (whatever its meaning may be in the vocabulary of Kotzebue,) and the palliative ascription of

“*ignorance*,” where, *had his charges been true*, nothing ought to have shielded the perpetrators from the direct imputation of *diabolical malevolence*. I invite, nay, entreat him to declare, from the mouth of which of these accused men he received that *confession*, which could alone warrant an honourable man in giving to the world such a statement, and in affixing to it the confirmation of his own *readiness to believe* its truth.

I will now proceed to pay some attention, though slight, to the premises on which Forster himself formed of the estimate which furnished the ground of the charge. This computation was made from exceedingly uncertain data, namely, the number of fighting men present with the fleet of canoes collected at Pare in 1774. He was told they all came from two districts, and he multiplied, what he supposed to be the average number of men, by the total number of districts, which made 2,700 : each man he supposed to be married, and to have one child ; thus, he made 81,000 connected with the fleets, besides old persons, and those who were not warriors, or employed in navigation. He supposed the inhabitants of the larger peninsula to be, at least, double the above number.* But, without alluding to the deceptive sources whence he drew his inferences, Forster is wrong in the very outset. Supposing one hundred and fifty-nine war canoes to have come from Atehuru, which is doubtful, as the fleet probably included those of the allies ; while Atehuru

* Obs. p. 218.

is the name of a district, it is also the designation of one of the *five* great political divisions of Tahiti; and, calculating from the men in the fleet, he should have multiplied by five, or at most by six, instead of twenty-four, or forty-three.

Forster did not intend to mislead his readers; but I fear the same cannot be said of Kotzebue. Had his authority been correct, it would not have proved that subsequent depopulation was chargeable on the Missionaries. But the author of the "New Voyage," not satisfied with preferring charges without any foundation, manifests, in his quotation, as great a deviation from truth, as in the other parts of his account. Forster does not estimate the population of Tahiti at one hundred and thirty thousand, but only one hundred and twenty-one thousand. The following is his own conclusion of his calculations. Having spoken of the inhabitants of Eimeo, he says :—

The inhabitants of Tiarabu,	40,500
Those of Tiobreonoo, the larger peninsula, . . .	<u>81,000</u>
The inhabitants of all Otaheite,	121,500*

This estimate of Forster, which was probably incorrect on account of the fallacy of his premises—as was also that of Cook, who estimated the inhabitants by the number he saw at one place, multiplied by the geographical extent of the island—shews how unsafe it is to draw precise conclusions from partial and imperfect information.

* Forster's Obs. p. 222.

Whatever the population might have been in 1774, in 1797, when the first Missionaries arrived, and the period *subsequent* to which Kotzebue states nine-tenths of the inhabitants have been destroyed, it did not amount to seventeen thousand. Mr. Wilson, the chief officer of the *Duff*, travelled round the island, for the special purpose of ascertaining the number of inhabitants, and, after visiting each district, and conversing with most of the chiefs, &c., by a tabular view of the number in each district, he furnishes the following result :—

Total of men, women, and children, in Otaheite, . . .	12,042
Ditto, in Taiarabu, or smaller peninsula, . . .	4,008

Total in the whole Island 16,050*

Admitting this to be the population when the Missionaries arrived, and that in 1815 it did not amount to more than half the number ; the ravages of foreign disease, the introduction of ardent spirits, the immolation of human sacrifices, the extensive prevalence of infant murder, and the fact, that during that period the inhabitants of this single island had been ten successive times engaged in war—are quite sufficient to account for the diminution ; and the only matter of surprise is, that the race was not exterminated. That such causes existed, will appear from the Missionary journals, as well as the accounts of the voyagers by whom the people were visited. Under date Aug. 29, 1803, the Missionaries write—

* Wilson's Voyage in the *Duff*, p. 215.

“ Human sacrifices continue to be frequently offered, and Pomare is pursuing all his wicked arts to render his god propitious. The murder of infants is still continued, which, with human sacrifices and diseases, is fast depopulating Otaheite. The number of inhabitants calculated by Mr. Wilson, in 1797, is now reduced to *less than one half*. There are not eight thousand inhabitants on the island. It is conjectured by some of us, that they do not exceed five thousand. And if Captain Cook’s computation of two hundred thousand (which we very much suspect) was any ways right, what an awful carnage has death made in a few years !”

“ July 8, 1802. The rebels were very mercifully kept at a distance from us. They remained some time ravaging Tyaraboo, and then returned to their own lands. Prior to their return, Pomare took the advantage of their absence, and sent a strong party, to fall, in the dead of the night, upon the men, women, and children, that they had left at home. This enterprise succeeded ; and two hundred of them, it is reported, were slain. This, instead of intimidating the rebels, inflamed them the more. They professed their determination to be, the utter extirpation of the present governors.”

That the population has increased since the general reception of Christianity, is not to be denied. It is proved, not more by accounts kept of births and deaths every year, than by the common testimony of all who have visited the island before or since. From these considerations it will be evident to every unprejudiced mind, that the charge brought by Kotzebue against the Missionaries, of having, by “ the bloody introduction of their religion,” occasioned the murder of seventy thousand of the original inhabitants, is entirely false, and can be traced only to enmity of mind against the religion they have introduced, or rage at

not finding the people in the same state in which they were described while licentious idolaters.

From these facts it also appears, that the account of *King Tajo*, and the young hero Pomareh, is a mere fable, having no foundation whatever, either in characters or events, connected with the recent history of Tahiti;—that the charge against the Missionaries, of introducing Christianity by force, is, in all its parts, untrue, and that depopulation has not been caused, but prevented, by its influence. On other equally exceptionable parts, in the paragraphs above quoted, I have refrained from entering, presuming that the reader would have no desire to investigate Kotzebue's competency to decide on what was "true, genuine Christianity," and what was not; or, how much Christianity the religion taught by the Missionaries contained.

SECTION III.

Charges against the Missionary Society.—Missionaries and native teachers.—Captain Beechey's testimony in favour of the latter.—Illiberality towards Mr. Wilson.—Attentions of the Missionaries.—Ingratitude of Kotzebue.—Dangers to which strangers are exposed among the islanders.—Security derived from Missionary stations.—Absurdity of transient visitors pronouncing on the qualification of the teachers, or the Christian attainments of the people.

THE Missionary Society, through its deputation and agents, are the next objects of Kotzebue's animadversion ; yet the only interference of the deputation between him and the natives was on his behalf, when one of them expressed his disapprobation at the conduct of a native, who had stolen an article from one of Kotzebue's seamen. They received him at their table, and tendered him those civilities which enlightened travellers find a pleasure in shewing to strangers in distant parts of the world.

The unobtrusive, but indefatigable and useful, native teachers are next assailed. Having spoken of those teachers, he remarks—

“ In Russia, a careful education, and diligent study at schools and universities, is necessary to qualify any one to be a teacher of religion. The London Missionary Society is more easily satis-

fied; a *half savage*, confused by the dogmas of an *uneducated sailor*, is, according to them, perfectly fitted for the sacred office."*

That none of the native teachers have received a university education, and that some of them have been unfit for their work, is not denied; but they have all been capable of communicating instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic, and mechanical arts, to the tribes among whom they have gone; and of teaching the plain and essential principles of religion; and that they have manifested many instances of noble Christian devotedness; endured much persecution; been exposed to imminent danger, or great distress; have persevered, notwithstanding, and that by their means many thousands of the inhabitants of adjacent and distant islands have renounced idolatry, embraced Christianity, and become a comparatively temperate, industrious, and happy people—is equally undeniable. The evidence of captains of vessels, by whom the islands have been visited, is, on this point, satisfactory.

The testimony borne in 1826, in the voyage of his Majesty's ship *Blonde*, under the command of the Right Honourable Lord Byron, to the effects of their labours in Mauti, or Parry's Island, quoted by the late Mr. Orme, in his *Defence of the South Sea Mission*, is not more applicable to that than other islands. The entire population of a number, amounting in one island alone to between 6,000 and 7,000, have renounced idolatry, through the labours of these native

* New Voyage, page 154.

Missionaries. More than thirty islands, exclusive of the stations of European Missionaries, and those newly formed by natives among the Navigators' Islands, are, under their instruction, advancing in knowledge and religion. In confirmation of this, I refer to the decisive testimony of the noble commander of the *Blonde*, and to the evidence of Captain F.W. Beechey R.N., one of the latest voyagers in the Pacific. Speaking of Byam Martin Island, Captain Beechey observes—

“ We very soon discovered that our little colony were Christians : they took an early opportunity of convincing us of this ; and that they had both testaments, hymn books, &c. printed in the Otaheitan language.”*

And afterwards, speaking of the people whom he met at Bow Island, he states,

“ Among these was a native Missionary,† a very well-behaved man, who had used every effort to convert his new acquaintances to Christianity. He persevered amidst much silent ridicule, and at length succeeded in persuading the greater part of the islanders to conform to the ceremonies of Christian worship. It was interesting to contemplate a body of savages abandoning their superstitions, silently and reverently kneeling upon the sandy shore, and joining in the morning and evening prayers to the Almighty.”

The Missionary at Matavai is the next object of contemptuous remark. Of him, Kotzebue says—

* Beechey's Voyage, vol. i. pp. 164 and 178.

† “ We were told, that at Chain Island there were thirteen houses of prayer, under the direction of native Missionaries.”—Vol. i. p. 178.

“ Wilson also, an old man, has now lived twenty years in Tahiti; he was originally a *common sailor*, but has zealously devoted himself to theology, and is honest and good-natured.”

And again, as quoted above,

“ A half savage, confused by the dogmas of an uneducated sailor,” &c.

This, to say the least of it, is not more illiberal than unfounded, and manifests a degree of vulgarity, which any one, in the station occupied by the writer, ought to have felt it beneath him to employ. It will not injure the individual against whom it is directed, and merits no reply. Mr. Wilson never was a sailor, but resided in Aberdeen, near the place of his birth, until 1788, when he came to London, where he followed a respectable business, and was united to the Christian church under the pastoral care of the late Rev. Dr. Waugh, until he became connected with the Missionary Society, in 1798.

Mr. Wilson's having been a sailor, had it been true, would not have incapacitated him for becoming, after suitable preparation, a Missionary, nor have diminished his efficiency as such; but there can be no doubt that the misrepresentation is introduced here, and alluded to elsewhere, for the purpose of lessening, in the estimation of Kotzebue's readers, the Missionary, and the religion he has been honoured to assist in promoting.

Scarcely had Kotzebue's ship reached the anchorage, when he sent, and solicited the assistance of the Missionary in accomplishing the objects of his visit.

Kotzebue's own account will shew the advantages he derived by his means. In the evening of the day, he observes,

“ I had sent a message to the Missionary Wilson, by an officer, who now returned, bringing for answer an assurance, that the Missionary would with pleasure do all in his power to assist us in procuring our supplies ; a promise he *faithfully* kept.*

On the following morning “ I resolved to go ashore and pay a visit to Mr. Wilson, that I might procure, through his means, a convenient place for our astronomical observations. —Mr. Wilson gave me a cordial welcome to his neat and simple dwelling, and presented to me his wife, an English woman, and two children.—By the influence of Wilson, a small house, situated on Cape Venus, was cleared for our astronomical observations, as a special favour from government. I was also accommodated with a royal pleasure-house in its neighbourhood. The environs were very beautiful : high trees, covered with thickest foliage, invited to repose under their shadows ; and a brook, clear as crystal, offered an inviting bath. The air was filled with the perfume of a neighbouring orange-grove, which scattered its fruit upon the earth.”—“ Dr. Eschscholz and myself immediately took possession of my new abode, and erected our little observatory. After a long, wearisome voyage, I cannot express the delight I experienced in reposing amidst such enchanting scenes of natural beauty.”—“ Having occasion one morning to visit Wilson on business, I found his door, which usually stood open, closed and fastened : I knocked several times ; but the whole house seemed buried in the repose of death : at length, after loud and repeated strokes, the door was opened by Wilson, whose cheeks, bedewed with tears, made me apprehensive that some great calamity had befallen him ; I was, however, soon satisfied that devotion alone had caused this emotion. In an ante-room I found four or five naked Tahitians, [without shoes,

* New Voyage, Vol. i. p. 149.

stockings, or hats,] of the highest rank, as Wilson told me, on their knees reading the Bible. Having apologized for what appeared to be an unseasonable intrusion, I was about to retire, but was invited by Wilson, in a friendly manner, into the inner apartment."

" During breakfast, Wilson related the difficulties he had encountered in the conversion of the Tahitians."

Here we perceive, from his own account, that Kotzebue had solicited assistance from the Missionary, which had been promptly and uniformly rendered ; he had, by its means, experienced delight which he could not express ; he had been " cordially welcomed" to the " neat and simple dwelling," and had shared the hospitality of this individual, who voluntarily and disinterestedly had exiled himself from country and friends for upwards of twenty years ; and, in return, he is falsely represented, not only as a common uneducated sailor, but as guilty of the most appalling crimes ; for, on concluding his account of the conversation above referred to, at breakfast, Kotzebue observes—

" How different, in all probability, would the effect have proved, had he, instead of the miraculous history of his religion, directed the attention of the susceptible Tahitians to its *pure morality*, leading so naturally to the idea of a common Father, and a fellowship of charity. *O ye Missionaries, how much blood might ye not have spared !*"*

If, to virtuous minds, there be one vice more odious, and the practice of which is more abhorrent,

* New Voyage, vol. i. p. 199.

than another, not only to Christian principle, but to every manly and generous feeling, it is that of ingratitude. Even the heathen have branded with infamy the ungrateful guest. How far the author of the "New Voyage" is exempt from the imputation, I leave it to my readers to decide.

Besides the tribute of just and honourable feelings, there is another consideration that ought to have skreened the Missionary from his criminating charge, viz. the security afforded by him and his fellow-labourers to the vessels, property, and lives of those who voyage among the islands of the Pacific. Scarcely a year passes in which we do not hear of savage and murderous quarrels between the natives of other islands, and those by whom they are visited. These have generally arisen from some dispute, or perhaps the oppression of preceding visitors, which the natives determine to revenge upon the next who may arrive ; or from the desire of a turbulent chieftain to obtain fire-arms and ammunition, the principal articles formerly carried by foreigners for barter. In some of the Marquesas islands, at present, a trading ship scarcely dares to anchor. In the Friendly islands, according to Mariner, while the chiefs were manifesting the strongest attachment to Captain Cook, they planned the assassination of himself and officers, and, in order to accomplish it, invited him to a grand heiva by torch-light. In Tahiti, before any Missionaries arrived there, the natives, eager for plunder, cut the cables of Captain Bligh's vessel, that she might

drift ashore. After the Missionaries obtained influence, every ship was safe, even those wrecked in the neighbouring islands, as was the case with Captain Byers, who, when the *Margaret* was cast away among the isles of the cannibals to the eastward, found an asylum in Tahiti. But when the Missionaries, on account of the idolatrous wars, had been obliged to leave the island, the first ship that arrived (the *Venus*) was seized, the master and seamen kept prisoners, to be offered to Oro. Before the Missionaries left, they had written a letter, warning the captains who might come, of their danger, and had confided in a native to deliver it to the master of the first ship that might arrive. The *Venus*, however, was taken before he could deliver the letter; and the *Hibernia*, Captain Campbell, only escaped by receiving it as he was approaching the harbour. In 1813, the Tahitians, or Society Islanders, seized the colonial brig, *Queen Charlotte*, then among the Pearl Islands, murdered the officers, and, killing or disabling the crew, took possession of the ship. The master's life was only spared at the intercession of Paofai, a chief of Tahiti, who had been his friend. Soon after this, they murdered Captain Fodger, and part of his crew, and took possession of his ship, the *Daphne*. But since the establishment of Christianity, in 1815, and the return of the Missionaries, every ship that has visited Tahiti, and the adjacent islands, has been as safe as if in the port of London or St. Petersburg.

The change in the behaviour of the islanders, among whom only native teachers are settled, is not less decisive. Of the conduct of the inhabitants of Rurutu, Captain Chase, who commanded a large American ship, that was wrecked there, has recorded the following testimony :—

“ The natives gave us all the assistance in their power, from the time the ship struck, to the present moment. The first day, while landing the things from the ship, they were put into the hands of the natives, and carried up to the native mission-house, a distance of half a mile, and not a single article of clothing was taken from any man belonging to the ship, though they had it in their power to have plundered us of every thing that was landed, which fully proves the honesty of the natives of this island. Since I have lived ashore, myself, officers, and people, have received the kindest treatment from the natives, that can be imagined, for which I shall ever be thankful. Myself and officers have lived in the house of Buna,* who, together with his wife, has paid every attention to make us comfortable, for which I return my unfeigned thanks, being the only compensation I can make them at present.”

The following account will place the advantages of Missionary stations in a still stronger point of view.

On his passage from Tahiti to New South Wales, in 1825, in the brig *Brutus*, Mr. Nott touched at Aitutake (the Whytootake of Cook). Native teachers had been there above three years : the inhabitants were Christians. The passengers landed, and when the natives found a Missionary among them, they requested he would preach to them ; and about a thousand soon assembled. The islanders shewed

* A teacher from Raiatea.

their visitors every possible kindness, accompanied them to the ship when they embarked, and carried a number of supplies to the captain, for which they refused to take any remuneration. After stating these facts, Mr. Nott, in a letter dated May, 1825, continues :—

“ The next island we called at was one of the Friendly Islands, (*Eooa*, as written by Cook, and as we have it on the charts, but which should be written *Ua*.) At this island also, as there is no anchorage, and we were obliged to stand off and on while the boat went on shore, whence a circumstance took place, which, among many others, might be brought forward to shew the value of Missionary establishments. The boat reached the shore with Captain Forbes, the chief mate, and Mr. Torrance. They began to barter with the natives, and obtained several pigs, some plantains, cocoa-nuts, &c. but suddenly they were seized, and every thing was taken from them, without any offence being given. Axes were held over their heads, and knives applied to their throats ; a rope was also brought, and formed with a noose, and hung over their heads, to signify to them what they must expect, if they offered to escape or resist. A ransom was then demanded before they would let them return to us on board the brig, and the chief mate was sent off in the boat, to fetch the property. But it was night when the boat reached the brig, and it was not proper that she should return to the shore until morning. During the night, the prisoners, Captain Forbes, Mr. Torrance, and another of the boat's crew, were kept in the greatest terror, with a strict guard, and continual threats. In the morning, the boat was sent on shore with muskets (or rather, fowling-pieces, of considerable value), powder and cloth, to the amount of £30 or £40, and a New Zealander, who was on board with us, was sent to negotiate the affair ; the people being afraid to venture on shore again. The chief received the property, and Captain Forbes was permitted to come on board the brig, but

Mr. Torrance was detained till more property should be sent on shore, which was taken in the boat, by the New Zealander, and Mr. Torrance was then permitted to come off to us. At this instant, Captain Forbes exclaimed, ‘ O Mr. Nott ! we see now, more than ever, what has been done by you and the Missionaries on the islands where you have resided, and the trouble you have had in bringing the natives from what they were, to what they are now,’ ” &c.

This extract requires no comment; and the occurrence at *Ua* is not singular.

The death of the adventurous Magellan, in a quarrel with the Ladrone islanders ; of Captain Cook, at Hawaii ; the murder of Lieutenant Hergest and his astronomer, at Oahu ; of M. de Langle, the companion in command of La Perouse, at the Navigators’ Islands ; the massacre of the officers and crew of the Boyd at New Zealand ; of the Fair American, at the Sandwich Islands ; the seamen of the Coquette, at the Marquesas ; the officers and crew of the Port-au-Prince, at Lafuga ; and those of the Elizabeth and Rambler, among the adjacent islands ; and, with few exceptions, the accounts of every voyager, from the first who traversed this ocean to the last whose narrative has been given to the public, shew the dangers attending the intercourse of Europeans with the natives, and contain most tragical accounts of the loss of human life.

It is not necessary to inquire into the causes of these outrages—the recollection that they have occurred, and do still occur, where there are no Missionaries, as Captain Beechey’s recent account of

his intercourse with the inhabitants of Easter and Gambier Islands painfully demonstrates ; and the fact, that, in those islands or ports where Missionaries have been settled, they have been prevented, is equally decisive. And, whether the presence of the Missionary has prevented the unnecessary display of power in the deadly use of fire-arms, or other aggressions on the part of the visitors ; or, by becoming the medium of communication, has avoided misunderstandings and quarrels ; or, that his influence has restrained the rapacious ferocity of the natives—it manifests alike, the advantages which have resulted even from his residence in the islands, and ought to have protected him from the assaults of those who have derived such security from his presence.

On what Kotzebue reproachfully calls the dogmas of the Missionary, which, he takes upon him to say, “ the teachers understand as little as the taught,” it is scarcely necessary to observe, that the statement is altogether untrue ; and I shall only add, that the writer could not possibly know what either the teachers or the taught, understood, and that therefore the insinuation is necessarily his own fabrication.

Supposing the *Predpriatie*, or any other Russian ship, to have anchored in Matavai bay, to have remained there ten days ; that, during this period, the natives had once visited the ship, and seen the crew setting up the rigging, or engaged in other ship’s work—witnessed those on board exercising with their guns, &c. ; or that they had been once

admitted to the tent on shore, and beheld the officers making astronomical observations, but remaining all this time unacquainted with every word in the Russian language, while the Russians were as unacquainted with theirs, and consequently unable to hold any intercourse, except by signs, with the strangers ; and supposing that, after the departure of the ship, one of these natives should have published an account, not merely of the circumstances of their visit, and of what they saw, but of the practical seamanship and nautical skill of the crew and officers, or the cowardice or bravery of both, and not of these only, but of the whole nation to which they belonged, would any one have considered the account deserving of the slightest attention ? yet they would have been quite as well qualified for such a work, as Kotzebue was to decide how far the Missionaries were competent to teach Christianity, and how much, or how little, the natives understood what was taught.

It is impossible to imagine any thing more absurd, than the conduct of a naval visitor, whose education and habits of life have been those of a seaman, who is himself perhaps very imperfectly acquainted with the contents of the Bible, and probably knows little of Christianity beyond an acquaintance with some of its mere ceremonies, as observed in his own country ; who remains but a few days in one of the harbours ; is totally ignorant of the language of the people ; who is present at one of their religious assemblies, unat-

tended by an interpreter, and whose interpreter, at other times, if a native, knows nothing of the language of his employer beyond a few terms in most common use—nothing, I say, can be more absurd than that such an individual should pretend to pronounce on the doctrines or qualifications of the whole body of the Missionaries in the South Sea Islands, (only one of whom he had ever seen); and upon the scriptural knowledge or religion, not simply of such of the natives as he had seen, but of the entire community. Had his own mind been well informed on the subjects of revelation, he might have been fitted to give judgment; but that this was not the case, we shall see hereafter. Had he resided some time among the people, and understood their language; or had he derived his information from those whose own piety and means of observation had enabled them to have imparted it—his testimony might have been entitled to regard; but, in the absence of all these, it would have been quite as advantageous to his own credit to have omitted his notice of what he calls “the dogmas” of the Missionary, and of the people being “required to meditate upon what the teachers understand as little as the taught.”

Kotzebue has not reflected much credit on his country, or on the generosity and candour which usually belong to his profession, by this illiberal attack; nor subsequent voyagers much cause for satisfaction in the probable effect of his visit, which will not be

diminished, by the return the inhabitants of Tahiti have received at his hands, for the attention they paid, and the supplies they so readily furnished. But captains from Russia, besides himself, and from other parts of Europe, also have visited these islands ; and their testimony, which will be noticed hereafter, with that of Captain Chase, already mentioned, although the latter is one of those whom Capt. Kotzebue seems to think so unworthy of regard, stands in honourable contrast with his own.

SECTION IV.

The introduction of Christianity considered a catastrophe.—The “ante-Christian” Tahitians.—Actual state of the people while idolaters.—Kotzebue’s account of the calamities that have followed Christianity, stated and examined.—Useful arts and temporal benefits introduced by the Missionaries.

NOT satisfied with having thus repaid the friendly services of the Missionaries, Kotzebue attempts to injure them and their work in the estimation of his readers, by representing the effects of their labours as most disastrous, and describing the circumstances of the people at the time of his visit as much worse than before their reception of Christianity. Having spoken of “their conversion to the Christian faith,” he remarks,

“To estimate the effect of this CATASTROPHE, (this is Kotzebue’s expression, though his translator has rendered it ‘*great change*,’) we must compare Christian Tahiti, as it now is, with the accounts early voyagers have left us of its heathen times.”

He then proceeds to represent the natives as formerly in a state which, in most respects, might answer very well for the inhabitants of a Mahomedan paradise, affirming that,

“Wholly devoid of envy, they rejoiced in each others good fortune; and when one received a present, all seemed

equally gratified. To hatred and revenge they are wholly strangers ;” and that “their time was passed in *indolence* and enjoyment.”

The females are described as handsome, and this is supported by reference to writers, whose account of their lasciviousness (which seems to have been the chief thing that received the commendations of many of their early visitors) cannot be read without disgust. He allows, indeed, that their morals were exceptionable in this respect, and that they offered human sacrifices, and treated their prisoners with barbarity ; that they were addicted to theft and intoxication ; and that the children of the *Areois* were murdered ; and continues,

“ Having now noticed (or rather apologized for) all that was reprehensible in the otherwise amiable character of the *ante-Christian Tahitian*, I hope the reader, in consideration of his many good qualities, will forgive his faults, and, in a friendly disposition towards him, cast a glance upon his innocent amusements.”

Some of these he describes, and concludes,

“ Thus, oppressed by no care, burdened by no toil, tormented by no passion, seldom visited by sickness, their wants easily satisfied, their pleasures often recurring, the Tahitians passed a life of enjoyment under the magnificent sky of the tropics, amid scenes worthy of paradise.”*

Before presenting my readers with the contrast, as exhibited by Kotzebue in his description of the present state of the islanders, I would remark, that

* New Voyage, vol. i. p. 144.

this Arcadian picture is untrue, and is the result of a desire to support a theory of error, or of a very superficial acquaintance with the actual state of the people.

The lower classes were unmercifully plundered and oppressed; domestic happiness was unknown; the females were reduced to the greatest debasement, not being allowed to eat of the same food as the males, but were obliged to subsist on inferior kinds; were not allowed, on pain of death, to dress it at the same fire, or deposit it in the same basket. The woman was regarded only as the slave of the other sex. Forster observes, "This inequitable custom," that of the wife eating after the husband, "however, is universally received at Tahiti and its neighbourhood." Kotzebue himself states,

"Where such manners prevailed, and woman was" so "regarded, she could not stand very high; and love, in its best sense, was unknown among them."

Instead of being "tormented by no passion," they were without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful, filled with wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, malignity, and murder, and, under the domination of these propensities, often acted more like fiends than human beings. They were a prey to every vile and furious passion, that has ever found a lodgment in the human bosom; and we have only to conceive of a state of barbarous society, without wholesome laws, and under the reckless despotism

of such dispositions, to have a tolerably correct idea of their actual state. The younger Förster, after speaking of their practices, remarks, in conclusion,

“ That there should exist so great a degree of immorality in a nation, otherwise so happy in its simplicity, is a reflexion very disgraceful to human nature in general.”

Kotzebue himself informs us, that the pride of the Areois prevented their forming matrimonial connexions with the inferior classes, and led them to associate the distinction of birth with their savage ideas of a future state, as he remarks,

“ The pride of the Yeris (Ariis) prompted them to believe in a heaven peculiar to themselves, where they should associate only with their equals in birth.”*

The following are, from very many evidences, recorded in the journals of the first Missionaries, that “to hatred and revenge” they were not “wholly strangers.”

“ July 2, 1800.” A pair of scissors had been stolen. “This morning the owner of the scissors, knowing or suspecting who had taken them, took his razor-knife, and went in quest of the thief: having found him, he charged him with the crime; the other denied it; the former insisted upon it that he was the thief, and from a few words went to blows. The man with the knife stabbed the other in a dreadful manner in the breast, and wounded him shockingly in one of his arms, and the calf of one of his legs. He would soon have killed him, if some by-standers had not kindly interfered. The man thus stabbed and cut was led away to the

* New Voyage, vol. i. p. 135.

house of a neighbouring priest. Mr. Broomhall having intimation of what was done, immediately went and offered his assistance, which being accepted, he was led up to his dwelling, and Mr. Broomhall sewed up the wound on his breast, and applied such suitable remedies as he had ; this done, he was led to his habitation. It is probable he would soon have been a dead man, if Mr. Broomhall had not been at hand to render him assistance."

" December 23d. 1802. This morning a barbarous murder was committed by one native on the body of another, in a house a few yards distant from us. The murdered man, it appears, had been guilty of a very petty theft, for which he lost his life. He was struck a dreadful blow on the back of his neck with a tomahawk, that almost severed his head from his body, and his right shoulder was horribly cut with repeated blows. The perpetrator of this savage act walked about afterwards with the tomahawk in his hand, with as much unconcern as if he had been splitting up firewood, and behaved very insolently when spoken to about it."

Bligh* furnishes evidence of their barbarity not less conclusive; but in opposition to these, and a number of similar facts, Kotzebue would impose upon his readers his own fanciful picture of their perfect enjoyment, &c., and then contrasts it with the effects produced by that " catastrophe," the introduction of Christianity ; thus,

" Hence, among *the remains of these murdered people*, their former admirable industry, and their joyous buoyancy of spirits, have been changed for continual praying and meditating," &c.

" The Tahitians of the present day hardly know how to plait their mats, make their paper stuffs, or cultivate a few roots. They content themselves with the bread-fruit, which the soil

* Voyage, p. 116.

yields spontaneously in quantities more than sufficient for their reduced population. Their navy, which excited the astonishment of Europeans, has entirely disappeared. They build no vessels but a few little paltry canoes, with which they fish off the neighbouring coral islands.—They possess sheep, and excellent cotton; but no spinning-wheel, nor loom, has yet been set in motion among them: they choose rather to buy their cloth and cotton of foreigners for real gold and pearls. Horses and cattle have been brought to them, but the few that remain have fallen into the possession of strangers, and have *become so scarce*, that one hundred piastres was asked for an ox, that we wanted in provisioning the ship.

“If the religion of the Missionaries has neither tended to enlighten the Tahitians, nor to render them happy, just as little can be expected from the constitution founded upon it, which seems adapted only to draw yet higher the bonds in which the amiable people are held by their zealous converters.

“The Tahitians, accustomed to a blind reverence for the Missionaries, consult them in all their undertakings, and, by means of the constitution, have so confirmed their power, both as priests and rulers, that it would be difficult for governor, judge, or member of parliament, to retain their offices after having incurred their displeasure. They have shewn their artful policy in the choice of a guardian for the young king. It has fallen on the tributary king of the island of Balabola, distinguished by his giant height of seven feet, and by his enormous corpulence, which almost prevents his moving, but by no mental qualification.”

The charge repeated in calling the present inhabitants, “*the remains of these murdered people*,” has been already noticed, and it will be sufficient to refer the English reader to a few of the facts, which have already been before the public.

If the estimate of the population, formed by the Missionaries in the islands, was correct, it has in-

~~received~~ since their reception of Christianity ; and the fact, that a greater number of ships touch at the islands every year, and obtain supplies, is practical evidence of the industry of the islanders.

When Turnbull, who was at Matavai in 1803, arrived, there was one ship in the bay. As soon as he anchored, he learned from the master of this ship, and the Missionaries who visited him, that provisions were scarce ; and some time afterwards writes :

“ We found the report of the Missionaries, of the dearth prevailing in the island, too true ; for we had as yet been able to procure *no fresh provisions*, except a pig sent to us by one of the Missionaries.”*

So great is the difference, in this respect only, between the state of the islanders at that period, and at the present time, that now more than *thirty ships* sometimes touch at Tahiti in the course of the year, and obtain supplies ; besides which, five or six annually procure refreshments at other islands.

As to the disappearance of their *navy*, (the fleets of canoes mentioned by Cook and Forster,) they were nearly annihilated in the native wars which occurred before the Missionaries landed, and entirely so before the people became Christians ; but since becoming Christians, they have acquired a navy superior to any that ever before existed in the islands.

Even the construction of his own vessel, the *Predpriatie*, Captain Kotzebue tells us,

* Turnbull's Voy. vol. i. p. 135.

“ Was not likely to interest her (the queen’s) curiosity, as she was herself the owner of a well-built English merchant-ship.”

This ship trades regularly between the islands and New South Wales. Other chiefs also possess small vessels, and large boats or schooners, built by themselves, under the direction of European workmen. The natives of the neighbouring, or Society Islands, have, besides those now in hand, built seven vessels, from forty to seventy tons burden. These trade to different islands of the Pacific; and the natives are making rapid advances in commercial enterprise. This is abundantly proved by the annexed extract of one of the latest communications, dated in November, 1830, from Mr. Williams, the Missionary at Raiatea.

“ Mr. Hunter, a regular ship-carpenter, and a number of *native carpenters*, were employed to put our vessel (the Messenger of Peace) in good order. This has given the latter such an insight into the nature of that work, that several young men have become clever workmen. One has lately been to Huahine, and rebuilt Mahine’s small schooner of about twenty or twenty-five tons. He has done it remarkably well, having put in the beams, knees, deck, &c. in a regular way, so that no one, unless a regular ship-builder, could tell that it had not been done by an English carpenter. Two other vessels are now building—one, a fine little vessel, of about forty tons, for Tamatoa. They have framed it entirely themselves. She is of a handsome model, firmly put together, and well fitted; *both the wood and iron work the natives do entirely themselves*. The king’s quay is like a small dockyard. Mr. Hunter has a fine little vessel, of about fifty tons, in hand. The king’s is the second; and a large new schooner, built at Tu-buai, is brought down to be finished, and is also now down at

the quay, where they are sheathing her. Two men, whom I have taught smith's work, were employed to go to Tubuai, to make the iron work for that vessel, at the rate of *ten dollars* per month."

Thus, instead of their former admirable industry having ceased, although many are still idle, habits of skilful application are rapidly increasing; and so far from their having, as asserted by Kotzebue and some of the reviewers, "no vessels but a few paltry canoes, with which they fish off the coral islands," they build such as enable them to trade to distant islands!

Though Kotzebue states that no spinning-wheel or loom has yet appeared, all who know any thing of the islands know that both have been taken there by Missionaries, and the natives taught to spin and weave, and that a number of the natives have obtained, and worn, cloth spun and woven in the islands. The apparatus for sugar-manufactories was sent out by the Missionary Society in 1818; and, for the last ten years, the people in Tahiti, and its neighbourhood, have made excellent sugar.

There is a plantation a few miles to the south of Matavai, and not far from the true situation of Port Papeete, belonging to a nephew of one of the late Missionaries. It is cultivated by natives, and yields sometimes ten tons of sugar in the year, which is sold for, perhaps, two thousand dollars. There is another plantation at Papara, belonging to the chief of the place, and a son of one of the Missionaries, who is master of a native vessel.

The queen possesses, we are told, a pair of horses ; there are nearly twenty in the island. Most of the chiefs possess cattle ; but to whom are they indebted for them ? Captain Cook, indeed, left some, but the natives destroyed them. At my arrival at Tahiti in 1817, there was not a single animal of this kind on the island. When the Missionaries returned to Tahiti, they took cattle from Eimeo, where they had preserved them during the destructive wars that had ravaged Tahiti. From these, and others since brought from New South Wales, there are now perhaps not fewer than three hundred head of cattle in Tahiti, and ships are supplied with fresh meat, of excellent quality, at an average of three-pence per pound. Was it ignorance, or some more culpable feeling, that induced the author to say,

“ Cattle have been brought to them ; but, in consequence of the introduction of Christianity, the few that remain have fallen into the hands of the strangers, and have become so scarce,” &c.

Cattle might not be so numerous when Kotzebue was there, as they have since become ; but no fresh importation has taken place. In either case, all confidence in his testimony must be destroyed, though in the one he is less criminal than in the other. In 1818, we conveyed the first cattle to the Leeward Islands ; others have since been brought from Port Jackson, and they are now spread throughout the whole group.

The rearing of these animals has been of the

greatest service to the Missionaries by whom they were introduced, in supplying not only milk and meat for their own families, but enabling them, by furnishing ships with beef, to procure, in exchange, necessary articles of European manufacture, or the means of purchasing such. This, together with the Missionary's only mode of receiving support from the people, has been attended with some inconveniences; it has obliged him, in his intercourse with those by whom he has been visited, to act more like a trader than he himself desired, or than he would otherwise have thought compatible with his office. The circumstance, however, may be considered as peculiar, and resulting from the present situation of the people, who are in their state of transition from barbarism to civilization: these evils will of themselves cease, as the improvement of society advances.

Money is only partially introduced, and its relative value but little understood, hence the traffic is to a great extent carried on by barter; and the Missionary, instead of receiving, for the bills he draws on the Society, money to purchase what he requires in the islands, obtains cutlery, ironmongery, cottons, &c.; and with these pays the natives who assist in his household work, his garden, &c., as well as procures whatever he needs from the people. This also leads him to exchange such native products as he may possess, for those foreign commodities which the masters of trading vessels are accustomed to take to the islands. The captains of vessels were formerly

accustomed to solicit the aid of the Missionary, in their barter with the natives; but, although they were willing to render assistance, the evils resulting from their being the medium of traffic, and sometimes the dissatisfaction of both parties, were such as to induce them to decline it altogether; and although, from the fact of their having introduced and reared the first cattle preserved in the islands, they now possess the greatest number, yet, so far from wishing to monopolize them, as Kotzebue insinuates, by stating, that "the few that remain have fallen into (their) hands;" they have uniformly represented to the chiefs and people the advantages that would result from rearing them, and have urged their attention to it. The prejudices of the natives, singular as it may appear, were formerly such as to induce them to dislike even the smell of milk or beef; but these have now ceased, as the following extract of a letter from Mr. Crook, dated October 23d, 1830, will prove :—

"We have parted with our cattle to the people: nearly twenty of the natives purchased a cow, or female calf. They and their children are very fond of the milk, and make the animals exceedingly tame."

The climate appears to be favourable to the cattle; pasturage is abundant; and, as most of the chiefs, and many of the people, possess and prize them, there is every reason to expect they will become numerous; and increase, to those who reside on the islands, the means of subsistence, while they will

prove a most acceptable and important article of refreshment to those by whom they may be visited. But, whatever advantages may result from the introduction and preservation of these animals, to the Missionaries alone, all who share those advantages are indebted.

The trades of carpenter, smith, turner, mason, cotton-spinner, weaver, &c., the culture of cotton, sugar, tobacco, (with the latter, one hundred and fifty acres were at one time planted,) coffee, and other products of the soil, with salt-making, and various minor arts, have been taught to the natives by the Missionary artisans, and convey the best refutation of the insinuation, that the Missionaries encourage idleness. On the contrary, when the present daily employments of those who have yielded themselves to the influence of Christianity, are *compared* with their former habits, even the *charge of idleness* falls to the ground. Industry, and a love of labour, are so totally ungenial to the natural dispositions of the natives, that it might have afforded, to a candid observer, matter of no little gratification, to remark, that they had actually made such advances as they have done, in those praise-worthy attainments.

It may, indeed, be generally remarked upon these and similar cavils, founded upon the external aspect of society in these newly converted islands, that, were it possible to give the framers of them credit for the absence of culpable feelings, they betray, at least, great

ignorance of human nature, and the real effects of religion upon it, as marked by the history of other nations. Christianity is a moral cause, producing moral effects upon those by whom it is received: it pretends not to work miracles. The point, then, for a judicious and well-disposed inquirer to determine, if he wishes to do justice to God and man, in offering to the world his opinions, is, whether, duly considering the character and habits of a people previous to their reception of Christianity, it has really accomplished that degree of amelioration which reason and experience warrant him in expecting. By this equitable rule of judgment, the Missionaries, and their supporters, are content to be tried; and, on such grounds, they are sure of a verdict, from their reflecting countrymen, which will be to them an ample shield against the flippant and senseless calumnies (to call them by no other name) of Captain Kotzebue and his compeers.

SECTION V.

Deformity, &c. attributed to religion, proved to have existed before the arrival of the Missionaries.—Refutation of the charge of interference in matters civil and political.—Captain Beechey's testimony to the benefit of the laws.—Enforced attendance on public worship.—Nature of the influence of the Missionary, and true cause of the hostility to their proceedings.

ALLEGATIONS of another kind follow those that have been noticed, and we are gravely told that—

“ No music but that of psalms is suffered in Tahiti. Dancing, mock-fights, and dramatic representations, are no longer permitted. Every pleasure is punished as a sin, among a people whom nature destined to the most cheerful enjoyments : one of our friends having begun to sing for joy over a present he had received, was immediately asked by his comrades, *with great terror*, what he thought would be the consequence, should the Missionaries *hear of it?*”

The prohibition of music, dancing, &c., implied in this extract, I may notice hereafter. But, besides this, the next page in the book, which the English translator has, *with great taste*, headed, “ Religion inimical to beauty,” contains an imputation, which, among the many that have been brought against the Missionaries, has the merit of being certainly *original*. It is contained in the following passage :—

“ Their religion appears to have had an effect inimical to their beauty. The large-grown Yeris, solely employed in praying, eating, and sleeping, are all, men and women, excessively fat, even in early youth.”—“ The latter (*viz.* the Ariis) also frequently suffer under a most disfiguring disease, caused by want of exercise, and excess of nourishment! the legs swell to such a degree, from the knees downwards, that the form of the calf and foot is entirely lost, and the thick cylinders, which usurp the place of legs, and from under which the toes only project, resemble nothing but the legs of elephants, thence the name of elephantism has been bestowed on the complaint by Europeans.”—“ All the graces have departed from them; their fascinating smiles have vanished.”

Not to notice the indication here furnished of the grossness of the writer's mind, I confess this is, as Kotzebue and some of his reviewers observe, “ highly remarkable.” It is scarcely possible to read it with gravity.

In another part of his work, he talks about the plans and regulations of the Missionaries, offering “ many weak points to the shafts of ridicule,” and probably fancied himself quite invulnerable by these shafts, when he penned the above, and described the terror of the Tahitians on hearing one of their companions begin to sing: whether his readers will think so or not, I presume not to decide. But that a man, who had been thrice round the world, should not have refrained from writing and printing such nonsense, is at least as “ highly remarkable” as the accounts with which he has associated his name.

A quotation or two, from an authority to which

the writer himself not unfrequently refers, will shew that the introduction of this malady was anterior to that of Christianity. Forster, who was there four-and-twenty years before the Missionaries, and nearly forty before the people became Christians, states :—

“ The great profusion, &c. of food, has likewise occasioned in the idle men belonging to the race of Arees, a propensity to indulge in the pleasures of the table, beyond what is usual ; and the quantity of fruit and meat which these drones can habitually swallow, is hardly credible.”*

“ The gluttonous Arees, it is true, stuff themselves with immoderate quantities of food, but it causes no other inconvenience than to make them fat and unwieldy.”†

And, in regard to the swelling of the legs, Forster says—“ I observed at *Taha O’Raiedea*, Tongatabu, and New Caledonia, men with one, or both legs, enlarged to a *monstrous size* ;” and, in closing his account of the complaint, remarks—“ This seems to be a kind of *elephantiasis*, such as some people have in the East Indies, on the coast of Malabar.”‡

Hence it appears, that gluttony, corpulency, and “ the thick cylinders which usurp the place of legs,” were neither introduced by the Missionaries nor “ their religion” as asserted by the author of the “ *New Voyage*.” The ridiculous declaration, that the Missionary, or that his “ religion,” has made the men and women “ excessively fat” and ugly—has caused the complaint called “ elephantism”—is evidently too

* Obs. p. 414. † Obs. 480. ‡ Obs. 487.

fabulous to need a serious reply; yet this is the writer whom, as already noticed, some of the Continental journalists thank, for affording them the means of judging of the reports Missionaries give of the effects of their own labours; and, in confirmation of some of whose statements, British journalists are ready to stake their own credit, in the logical aphorism—"Such is the *natural result of indiscreet zeal.*"

It would be superfluous to say much on Kotzebue's account of the Missionaries infringing the liberties of the people, "their power as priests and rulers;" the laws; and the "son of the vanquished king Tajo."—Having already shewn that this king Tajo never existed, he can have left no son to be "a cloud in the political horizon."

In answer to his inquiry respecting "religious and political institutions:"—"How will these mighty powers operate on the Tahitians?—how can they, *the qualifications of their authors considered?*"—it is necessary to remark, that the part of the sentence printed in Italics is gratuitously added by the translator. The other points have been already so ably met in the "Defence of the South Sea Mission," by the late Mr. Orme, that it is only requisite to state, that the laws forming the foundation of the code, or constitution, which the Missionaries are charged with introducing within two years after Pomare's death, and during the minority of his infant son, were publicly promulgated by Pomare himself, five years before

Kotzebue's arrival; and an account of them was published in England in 1820.

Captain Beechey himself, speaking, in the "Narrative of his Voyage," of the Tahitian code of laws, observes:—

"The limit thus imposed on the arbitrary power of the monarch, and the security thus afforded to the liberties and properties of the people, reflect credit upon the Missionaries, who were very instrumental in introducing those laws."*

And, adverting to a trial for theft on the stores of his ship, Captain Beechey, who, from his own account, does not appear to have been disposed to undue lenity towards the offenders, observes:—

"The consideration which the chiefs gave to the merits of this question," (the guilt or innocence of the suspected persons,) "and the pains they took to elicit the truth, reflect much credit upon them. The case was a difficult one, and Hetotte, not being able to make up his mind to the guilt of the prisoners, very honestly differed from his colleagues; and his conduct, while it afforded a gratifying instance of the integrity of the man, shewed a proper consideration for the prisoners, which, in the darker ages, would have been sacrificed to the interested motives of coinciding in opinion with the majority. If we compare the fate which would have befallen the prisoners, supposing them innocent, had they been arraigned under the early form of government, with the transactions of this day, we cannot but congratulate the people on the introduction of the present penal code, and acknowledge that it is one of the greatest temporal blessings they have derived from the introduction of Christianity."*

The description Kotzebue gives of the effects of the

* Beechey's Voyage, vol i. p. 198.

power of the Missionaries is equally singular and untrue.

“The opinion,” he observes, “that it is easier to govern an ignorant than a well-educated community, seems here, as elsewhere, to form a fundamental principle of policy.”

This remark is certainly inapplicable to persons, the object of whose lives it has been to enlighten the ignorant, and civilize the barbarian; and who, to accomplish this, have voluntarily exchanged the comforts of a well-organized society, for the privations and trials inseparable from their vocation; have overcome difficulties that to many would have been insuperable; have brought into regular system the rude unformed language of the people; given those, whom science and philosophy left as ignorant as they found them, an alphabet, an orthography, and a grammar; taught the multitudes to read and write their own language; introduced the printing press; and, not only furnished them with the rudiments of literature, but with many thousand printed copies of translations of the most valuable portions of the sacred scriptures. The writer proceeds—

“To pray and to obey are the only commands laid upon an oppressed people, who submissively bow to the yoke, and suffer themselves to be driven to prayers by the cudgel. *A police officer is specially appointed to enforce the prescribed attendance upon the church and prayer meetings.* I saw him in the exercise of his functions, armed with a bamboo cane, driving his herd to the spiritual pasture.”

The palpable absurdity of this and corresponding passages in the *New Voyage*, is too conspicuous to need refutation; and surely Kotzebue gave his readers credit for no ordinary deficiency in common sense, if he expected to receive credit for their truth.

Compulsion is rarely used even by the parents towards their children; and the attendance of every adult, both at the school and the chapel, is entirely voluntary. The Missionaries have, it is true, a *power* over the people; and there would be something essentially defective in their system, or their agency, if they had not: it is not, however, that political or civil power, which would employ a police officer to enforce obedience; but a moral power, corresponding with that which a pious, devoted, and benevolent clergyman possesses in the parish, where he may be seen in the schools of the young, the cottages of the poor, by the bed-side of the sick and the dying, as well as in the sanctuary of the Most High—a power originated and sustained by the combination of pure motive, upright character, and impressive example.

This, indeed, gives the Missionaries an influence which their detractors are forced to acknowledge, while they shew their writhings under the restraints upon the open indulgence of vice, which it has imposed. This influence is employed, not to degrade those upon whom it is exercised, but to elevate and honour them; to raise them above the domination of brute passion; to implant the principles of divine truth in the heart, and to cherish as its offspring

the benefits of social life, and the sacred spring of domestic comfort. From the effects of their labours in this respect, more than from all other causes combined, has arisen the ungenerous treatment which the Missionaries have received from not a few of their European visitors. Reproach and slander from such causes, however virulent it may be, the Missionaries are not unwilling to bear; for, in addition to those consolations which are of a higher character, they feel confident that they possess the sympathy and the approbation of their fellow-christians, whose affection and esteem they are desirous, next to the approbation of their God, to obtain.

Without again referring to the sorrow felt at discovering the spoliation of personal beauty, which the author, in his hostility to Missions, has attributed to their influence, the following paragraph will illustrate and confirm the preceding remark. Speaking of those natives whom they induced to become companions in vice, manifesting "the utmost caution and secrecy," and "the most fearful anxiety lest their errors should be betrayed to the Missionaries," Kotzebue continues: "An accidental occurrence proved that their *terrors* were not groundless;" and, having spoken at some length, he thus concludes his account of the disgraceful conduct of his sailors—

"Suddenly the owner (of the house) and his wife disappeared in the night—the house was found empty the next morning—and

we could never learn what had become of its proprietors. Have the Missionaries already introduced the OUBLIETTES?"

Whether the author has drawn his illustration from French or Russian history, he knows best, but the resentment must have been strong, which could induce the writer thus insidiously to charge the teachers of the Christian religion with a crime, associated only with the most hated despotism.

The inmates were removed by no *oubliette*, or dungeon. What was the real cause of this desertion of their habitation, Mr. Bennet, the surviving member of the deputation from the London Missionary Society, who was there during the whole of Kotzebue's stay, shall declare. He states, that the husband removed with his wife towards Taiarabu, until the officers and crew of the Russian vessel had left Matavai, when they returned to their then unmolested habitation.

These are the circumstances on which Kotzebue grounds his crimination of those who have introduced a state of things among the people, which, if seen with unprejudiced eyes, and understood, he himself, as well as "Europe, would have admired." But the real fact appears to be, that, under the full influence of those representations of the volatile and licentious disposition and habits of the Tahitians, given in the narratives of Wallis, Bougainville, Forster, and others, he arrived in Matavai Bay on *the 14th of March, and remained there till the 24th*; found that a change in character and manners had taken place,

which froze the current of his feelings ; that the inhabitants were no longer the idolatrous and lascivious race described by the writers above referred to, but had become a more virtuous and temperate people. To the mortification which this discovery seems to have occasioned, and the restraint which the altered character of the people imposed, there can be little doubt that the gross caricature of religion which the author has drawn, and those charges of tyranny, &c. against the Missionaries, with which his work abounds, owe their origin.

SECTION VI.

State of the people.—Increase of industry.—Native generosity.—Progress of education.—Honesty.—Temperance.—Virtuous behaviour of the natives.—Contrast between the present and former conduct of the people in this respect.

BUT, that the state of things in Tahiti and the other islands, is such as will afford a high degree of satisfaction to every enlightened friend of humanity and social order, liberty, morals, and religion—will appear from Kotzebue's own statements, no less than from other and more authentic testimonies.

Notwithstanding all his enmity against Christianity, the author of the *New Voyage* is obliged to admit a number of facts, which fully establish the preceding remarks. The industry of the people may be inferred from his description of the village of Matavai; of which he says,

“ Among thickets of fruit-trees were seen the dwellings of the happy inhabitants of this great pleasure-ground, standing each in its little garden.”

Speaking also of the entertainment Mr. Hoffman met with in his excursion to the lake in the interior,

he remarks, in describing the habitations of the people—

“Bedsteads made of bamboo canes, and filled with soft matting, are placed along the walls, and make very comfortable couches. These pleasant little abodes, in which the greatest *cleanliness* is every where observable, are all surrounded by cultivated gardens. Mr. Hoffman’s visit to the house of his friend excited the greatest joy. His host presented his wife and children, and entertained him in the most splendid manner his means would allow.”*

Where one ship formerly visited Tahiti for supplies, thirty arrive now; and if the admirable industry of the people has ceased, and they live on the borders of famine themselves, how is it that all are so amply furnished with live stock and vegetables? When his frigate arrived, he observes—

“Numerous boats, laden with all kinds of fruits, provisions, and other articles of merchandise, immediately put off from the shore. As soon as the sails were taken in, I gave them permission to come on board, of which they eagerly availed themselves. With their wares on their backs, they climbed merrily up the sides of the ship, and the deck was transformed into a busy market.”*

No interruption of supplies occurred during the ship’s stay; and when the Russians departed, we are told—

“The Tahitians boarded the ship, bringing as many provisions as they could carry. They expressed their regret at leaving us; and, to prove the disinterestedness of their goodwill, would accept no presents in return.”

* Vol. i. p. 214.

† Vol. i. p. 148.

Such kindness certainly merited a different return. We have already seen, from the testimony of our author, that the natives were formerly incapable of mental effort, and that their time was passed in indolence. This has been noticed by every voyager. Turnbull, in 1803, remarks—

“If their land is fertile, and their climate serene, their physical temperament is an indolence which renders these natural gifts ineffectual. They (the Missionaries) possess a public garden, very well stocked and cultivated; and the greater part of them a private one, not much inferior. The space enclosed within the palisades of the public garden is about four acres; it seems natural to imagine, that its beauty and utility would have acted as a stimulus to the natives to imitate their industry. The indolence of the Otaheitans, however, is beyond the cure of any common remedy.”*

Captain Beechey also observes—

“The indolence of these people (i. e. the islanders) has ever been notorious, and has been a greater bar to the success of the Missionaries than their previous faith.”†

Now, besides the mechanic arts, already noticed, with which they are acquainted, they have a written language, and printed books, diffusing the elements of general knowledge, containing the laws which the nation has ratified, as the constitution by which its rights are secured, and its public intercourse regulated. They have, above all, the New Testament, and a number of initiatory treatises, by which the doctrines and precepts of religion are inculcated and preserved. The extent to which the use of

* Turnbull's Voy. Vol. iii. p. 18.

† Vol. i. p. 213.

letters prevails, we may learn from our author, who, speaking of the Missionaries, "who instructed the Tahitians in reading and writing," adds, "which acquirements are now tolerably common among them."* In every house, we are also told, a copy of the New Testament is to be found. Would that the knowledge, and, it may be added, the practice, of reading the Scriptures, prevailed as generally in Great Britain as it does in Tahiti!

More satisfactory confirmation of the great moral improvement of the Tahitians can scarcely be desired, than is afforded by the volumes now before us. They give evidence of a change the most desirable and advantageous, but the most difficult to effect; and the weight of this testimony will be undiminished by any supposition of partiality, in this respect, on the part of the writer.

Every early visiter has marked their propensity to *Theft*, which extended from the sovereign to the slave; whether the property belonged to an enemy or a friend. The clothing of the guest, who passed the night in their dwellings on shore, or the furniture of the cabin to which they were invited on board, were equally the objects of their cupidity. Turnbull gives the following account:—

"There are no greater thieves in the country than Otoo's attendants. Such are the chief men in the country, and such the priests and governors. The depravity of the common people

* Vol. i. p. 152.

need be no subject of astonishment, when such is the example of their superiors.”—Vol. iii. p. 83.

“I do not hesitate to say, that the whole island is but a receptacle of thieves. European property they will possess, by some means or other; and theft they consider as a cheaper coin than they can give by any method of purchase. One method of theft is as palatable to them as another. Pomarrie is himself as dexterous a thief as any amongst them.”—Vol. ii. p. 151. et seq.

“But theft, as I have before said, is a cheaper method of acquisition than purchase. The Otaheitans are thieves in every sense of the word; their impudence of theft exceeds all belief.”—Vol. ii. p. 166.

In confirmation of these notices, Kotzebue, in his description of their *former* state, remarks—

“Both sexes, and all ranks, were given to stealing; and so dexterous were they in plundering Europeans, that, notwithstanding the utmost vigilance, few days passed without something being stolen. Even the princesses appropriated trifles, whenever they had an opportunity.”*

Now, let the reader observe the contrast, in the testimony borne to their honesty during his visit. He remarks, at the close of the first day in Matavai—

“When the sun declined, our new acquaintances left us, to return to their homes, satisfied with their bargains, and delighted with the presents they had received, and without having stolen any thing, although above a hundred of them had been on board at once.”†

And after speaking of what he only suspected would have presented a temptation too strong to have been resisted, he observes—

* Turnbull's Voy. vol. i. p. 140. † New Voy. vol. i. p. 148.

“ Every theft, however, is, on discovery, punished without distinction of persons; and the criminal, on conviction, is generally sentenced to work on the highway.” †

Kotzebue seems to think, that the individual who had committed the theft already mentioned, was treated with too much severity; but he offers no evidence of this; and he admits, that this article, and an iron hoop, were all that was stolen during their stay. That any instance of dishonesty should occur, is matter of regret to the Missionaries, and is what they uniformly labour to prevent; but while they failed in accomplishing all that they have attempted, the fact, that an iron hoop was all that was lost from the ship, and a sheet all that was taken from the crew, speaks much for their improvement in this respect. This, Kotzebue admits in the statement: “ Our experience proves, that the lessons they have received from the Missionaries have had a practically good effect.”

To *Intoxication* they were greatly addicted when first discovered; using, for their inebriating draught, an infusion of the root and stalk of the ava, (*piper methysticum*,) and, more recently, ardent spirits. This did not escape the notice of Turnbull, the voyager before referred to. He resided a long time on shore, and observes—

“ During this (second) residence amongst them, I could not but observe their immoderate use of the ava. No sooner had they procured any fresh supply from Eimeo, or the more distant parts of their own island, than they gave themselves up to intoxi-

† Ibid. vol. i. p. 194.

cation, and remained stupid for days together. I was again confirmed in my opinion, that the introduction of spirits would be attended with the general destruction of the population.”*

“ The effects of their inebriety were really horrible. Otoo, the young king, was so furious in his fits of inebriety, that I am persuaded he would make no scruple of killing his subjects out of mere ferocity.”†

The writer of the foregoing paragraphs was not mistaken in the opinion he has expressed of the disastrous effects of ardent spirits. Rum has been the cause of more misery and destruction than the introduction of fire-arms, or of all the diseases, of European origin, with which the people have been afflicted. It has been carried there in great abundance, and recently hawked from door to door for sale, by some from whose intercourse and influence happier results might reasonably have been anticipated. Destitute alike of the principles of humanity and honour, and apparently actuated by no consideration but such as selfishness inspires; individuals of this class have, in open violation of the public enactments of the people themselves, imported cargoes of ardent spirits, and, to a great extent, they have been successful in promoting their use. The late Pomare, as stated in the *Polynesian Researches*, fell a sacrifice to a habit which, notwithstanding his full conviction of its evils, he could never overcome; and, but for the influence of Christianity, the native race would, in all probability, by this time have been

* Turnbull's Voy. vol. ii. p. 130. † Ibid. vol. i. p. 163.

extinct. In conversation with one of these retailers of ardent spirits, I pointed out the evil and misery that must result, and endeavoured to dissuade him from the continuance of the traffic, recommending the exchange of clothing, tools, &c. for native produce, instead of rum; when he replied in words to the following effect:—"It is not left to my own choice: rum is the cheapest trade; my owners put that on board, and it is as much my duty to obtain a cargo with that, as it would be, had they furnished me with cottons or hardware." The same principle would have justified the disposing of arsenic or any other poison. When the Christian religion was adopted, drunkenness was universally discountenanced, and the use of spirits has been revived by the means which have been chiefly successful in those parts where ships most frequently touch, and foreigners principally resort. The state of society in Matavai, in respect to the diminution of this vice, may be gathered from Kotzebue's own account, who states, that they "never saw a drunken person;" and, in describing a visit from the queen and suite, who, it will be seen, are not the best models of virtue that the island affords, observes, "the wine, though by no means despised, was very moderately enjoyed." And yet, after all this, the christianized inhabitants of Tahiti are to be held up to the view of the world as addicted to drunkenness! Truth and justice oblige me to declare, that, but for the intervention of foreign traders, the Tahitians would have been, at this day, among the

most temperate people on the face of the world. Their own laws were strong enough to prevent the production of spirituous liquors amongst themselves; and when the culture of sugar was introduced by the Missionary Society, it was an express stipulation, that rum should not be distilled. But the chiefs have not had power enough to prevent the importation of spirits by foreign traders.

The most intelligent among the chiefs regard ardent spirits as the nation's greatest scourge, and, in some of the islands, have prohibited the people from furnishing with supplies any ship that shall, in violation of the printed regulations which every captain receives on entering the harbour, offer them for sale.

Notwithstanding the efforts of foreigners to perpetuate intemperance, and the intoxication that may be seen at some of the ports when ships are in harbour, every one in the least degree acquainted with the circumstances of the people twenty years ago, and their present state, must admit that an alteration, alike important to the existence and well-being of the community, has taken place. This is more conspicuous from the fact, that drunkenness is a vice most difficult to abandon; that in highly civilized societies, where connexions, character, interest, and health, and all that elevates man above the brute, combine to preserve from the degradation it inflicts, its victim rarely escapes; and comfort, reputation, property, and life itself, usually perish beneath its power. Nevertheless, in the South Sea Islands, there are many who, though

formerly addicted to this vice, are now strictly temperate men.

But great as the change has been, it is yet, in this respect, less operative than it has been with regard to the cultivation of that leading virtue, which is the pledge and safeguard of domestic comfort, the foundation of all honourable and organized society, and the only source of the endearing and invaluable relationships in life. After all the information I have been able to collect, on the ceremonies, usages, barbarities, &c. of the former inhabitants of Tahiti, were I required to state in what respect they distinguished themselves most from other uncivilized or pagan nations, I should unhesitatingly reply—in the degree of their *Licentiousness*. No one can have read the accounts of the most transient visits of early voyagers, without disgust at the manners they describe; and though, in general, the writers were by no means disposed to darken the shades of the picture, some of them were constrained to declare, that “the excesses were incredible.” These excesses, I believe, surpassed whatever the most polluted records of ancient Greece, or modern Asia, have disclosed. Crimes which outrage nature, and for the commission of which heathen as well as Christian legislation has inflicted the penalty of death, were not only shamelessly and perpetually committed, but they served to elevate the perpetrators to enviable distinction among their associates, even in the highest classes of society. Besides these, there were deeds of darkness simultaneously practised by

multitudes; and deeds, in broad open day, so gross and horrid, that the slightest notice of them would be to outrage every feeling of delicacy and propriety implanted by nature, or cherished by religion.

Turnbull, who was a longer resident among them than any other person, except the Missionaries, who has published an account of their state at the time he dwelt among them, gives the following reasons for entering somewhat into detail:

“ If I have been thus full, perhaps minute, in my relation of the manners and customs of the Otaheitans, I have only to allege, in excuse, that it is my wish to exhibit to the eyes of my countrymen a complete picture of this island. The first navigators, in describing the beauty of the island, have been, perhaps, too partial in their judgment of the manners of the islanders, or resided too short a time amongst them.”*

And after speaking of some of their vices, he remarks—

“ Otoo himself is a monster of debauchery. Their pollution in this respect beggars all description; my mind averts from dwelling upon an object which recalls so many images of disgust and horror.”†

And to the early Missionaries, no barrier to their success appeared, on ordinary principles, so formidable as the universality and inveteracy with which these abominations were followed. The effect was the same on the minds of the first converts. I have heard some of the more intelligent among the men, well acquainted with native character and habits, men who, before they became Christians, had been heathen

* Vol. iii. p. 107.

† Vol. iii. p. 104.

priests, and who had possessed the greatest influence with their countrymen, state their opinions in terms such as the following :—" You may induce the people to discontinue murdering their infants, offering human sacrifices, and demon-worship. You may induce them to burn their idols, and embrace your faith, attend your worship, learn your books, and possibly even discontinue drunkenness and theft ; but the preservation of female virtue, union in marriage according to Christian precepts, and conjugal fidelity, will never be obtained."

Now, what is the fact? In 1815, 16, and 17, the people embraced Christianity throughout the islands ; at that period these abominations ceased, I believe, for a time, universally. The virtue of chastity was inculcated and maintained ; Christian marriage was instituted soon after ; and the inviolable obligations of the bond acknowledged ; and whatever deviations may have arisen, the great principle is uniformly maintained to this day. It is further my deliberate conviction, that these virtues prevail, among the inhabitants of those parts of the Society Islands unvisited by shipping, to as great an extent as among an equal numerical portion of our own population. To expect that a vice, the propensity to which was a constituent of their character, and the indulgence of which was connected with almost every usage that had for ages existed, should have been at once absolutely eradicated, would have been absurd. But, after all, though at the several ports or harbours in Tahiti, especially those at which

no Missionary resides, there are individuals who have fallen victims to the seduction and bribery of some by whom they are visited, (and in reference to whom the triumphs of profligacy are unblushingly recorded,)—yet, that in a community in which chastity was formerly unknown, and conjugal fidelity unlooked for, virtue should have prevailed to the degree in which it is acknowledged to have done amongst the Tahitians, is a phenomenon which, till it can be exhibited in the history of any other people, should, on the principle of honour and decency, have restrained their detractors from calumny. This change has been, under the Divine blessing, effected entirely by the exertions of Christian Missionaries, not only without any external assistance, but in the face of the determined opposition of many from whom they might have anticipated sanction and assistance. That the state of society, at the time Kotzebue visited Tahiti, warrants this representation, will appear from his own testimony. In improving their morals in this respect, he states, that “the influence of the Missionaries has been beneficially exerted;—it does not appear to me, that the breaches of this virtue (chastity) are more frequent, on the whole, than in Europe.” And in the account of the first day he spent in Matavai, he observes, “On this day we saw no females; and when we were afterwards occasionally visited by the women, they always behaved with the greatest propriety.* Let this statement be contrasted with the descriptions

* Vol. i. p. 149.

contained in Forster's and other accounts, or with a declaration of the surgeon of his Majesty's ship Cornwallis, who states, that on the first day that the above vessel came to anchor in Kearakekua bay, 400 native females came on board, and it will be impossible to resist the conviction, that, notwithstanding all the exceptions that are to be found, *an improvement in morals among the people, fully authorizing every statement that the Missionaries have made, has taken place.*

SECTION VII.

Religious change among the people.—Injustice of condemning the whole for the vices of those who resort to the seaports.—Kotzebue's account of a meeting for prayer.—His visit to the shore on the Sabbath-day.—Attendance at church.—Reflections.—The connection between the observance of the Sabbath and the existence of Christianity.—Reference to the Pitcairn Islanders.

GRATIFYING, however, as the above advances in moral improvement are, they form a part only of that great *religious* change, among the pleasing and conspicuous fruits of which, they now present themselves to the world. That this change has taken place—that the islanders as a nation profess Christianity, is the sum of what has been affirmed by the Missionaries, and is universally admitted. That many are defective Christians, they have never denied. That numbers were Christians in name and appearance only, and probably made a profession of religion from inferior motives, or for sinister ends—that a minority only of the adult population was Christian in reality—has even been distinctly stated: but that their Christianity was equal, or superior, to that of any equal numerical portion of the inhabitants of other countries,

professedly Christian, has been asserted, and admits of demonstration.

A seaport in England, especially such parts of it as are the principal places of resort for the crews of the vessels by which it may be visited, would not be allowed by any to afford a fair specimen of the Christianity of our own country; much less in these islands, where, besides the ordinary incitements to iniquity, the morals of the people are further vitiated by the influence and example of those whom Captain Beechey calls "idle dissolute seamen," to whom it may be a temporary rendezvous. A seaport, indeed, may be a suitable spot in which to ascertain the greatest amount of vice; but would be the last place in which a just estimate of the virtue of the community at large could be formed.

Maritime visitors do the natives great injustice, often I believe unintentionally, by representing the morals and character of the nation according to what they notice in circumstances in which, from the behaviour of their own crews, they would be most likely to observe only those over whom seduction, whether to intemperance or lewdness, has been most successful; while, from the same cause, the more virtuous would not become subjects of observation, even if they did not find it necessary to retire (as was the case with some during Kotzebue's visit) for greater security, and remain at a distance until after their departure.

The circumstance, also, of no Christian teacher residing at some of the places to which shipping resort,

and where, therefore, the above causes of corruption in morals operate uncontrolled, renders the behaviour of the inhabitants of such places a very unfair specimen of the general state of society. Of the baneful influence of men of the worst character—some deserters from Botany Bay, who have resorted to these islands, others who have absconded from their vessels, and mingled with the natives at the seaports—Kotzebue furnishes very distinct intimations. There is, from these causes probably, less religion, and more immorality, at the places where vessels anchor, than in any other, and perhaps in all other parts of the islands put together. This is constantly before the eyes of their visitors; but they depart without beholding the less conspicuous and more virtuous portions of the community, whose deportment, compared with that of the others, would have led them to more just conclusions. The unfavourable impression which the state of society in the vicinity of the harbours may produce, even on the minds of those most capable of judging of such subjects, is probably often increased by the mediums through which strangers receive the reports with which, if they will condescend to listen to them, they are often very industriously plied. It must have been from individuals of this class, whom he describes as; with some few exceptions, “wanderers,” who “bring with them many vices peculiar to the lower classes in civilized life,” but “are generally too ignorant and rough to produce any favourable influence on the natives,” that Kotzebue derived the materials for his

history of Tahiti—and they prove themselves to be such as might have been expected from such a source.

But allowing to these drawbacks the greatest weight which they can in justice claim to what do they amount, when contrasted with the elevation of the population at large from the barbarous and gross idolatry in which, till the gospel was preached to them by the Missionaries, they were confessedly plunged?

Accounts have been already circulated, through the medium of the Missionary publications, of the evidences of genuine conversion in large numbers; of the unimpeachable deportment, the correct moral sentiments, and just views of the being and character of the Most High, and correct knowledge of the leading and essential doctrines of the gospel, which many now possess. Besides the more obvious effects, in the advanced state of society amongst them, the benign influence of its sacred truths is not less solidly, though less conspicuously, evinced in the domestic order of numerous families, the cultivation of affection towards their offspring, the education of their children in the principles of religion, the large proportion of those who have received the rite of baptism, and who have united themselves in christian-fellowship. In some places, as in the island of Huahine, the latter amount to more than one-fourth of the adult population, and of them it may be said in general, that their conduct, so far as it is known, accords with the

requirements of religion. Above all, in the light which Christianity has poured on the otherwise cheerless passage to the grave ; the support its consolations have afforded to many of the people, when every source of earthly comfort has failed ; and the hopes of immortality, which, amidst the agonies of dissolution, it has inspired,—are alike sources of thankfulness and encouragement.

Of the regard paid to religion in the native families, of their assemblies for worship, and of the universal observance of the Sabbath, the evidence in Kotzebue's volumes is distinct and conclusive, notwithstanding the prejudice through which it had to force its way to his own mind, and the unfriendly feelings with which it is communicated.

We have already seen that a New Testament was to be found in every house ; and in the description of Mr. Hoffman's journey to the interior, we find it recorded, that the family with which he lodged acknowledged the bounty of the Creator, imploring his blessing on their food before they commenced their meals, and united in family prayer before retiring to rest. Of their meetings for social prayer, held occasionally at sunrise, before the people go to their respective employments, Captain Kotzebue gives the following account :—

“ I had heard much of an institution established by the Missionaries, for the instruction of the people, and was desirous to learn what progress the Tahitians had made in the rudiments of science. Being informed that the lessons commenced at

sunrise, the first rays of that luminary found me one morning at the school-house, as I conceived the simple structure before me to be.

“ I had not waited long, before the pupils of both sexes entered. They were not lively children, nor youths whose ardour for the acquisition of knowledge led to the seat of instruction, but adults and aged persons, who crept slowly in with downcast looks, and prayer-books under their arms. When they were all assembled, and seated on the benches, a psalm was sung; a Tahitian then rose, placed himself on an elevated bench, and read a chapter from the Bible. After this they sang again, and then knelt with their backs to the reader, who, also kneeling, repeated with closed eyes a long prayer. At its conclusion, the orator resigned his place to another Tahitian, when the whole ceremony commenced anew; another psalm, another chapter, and another prayer, were sung and said; again and again, as I understood, a fresh performer repeated the *wearisome* exercise; but my patience was exhausted, and, at the second course, with depressed spirits and painful impressions, I left the assembly.

“ Several such meetings were established in different parts of the island, but no schools of a different character. The children are taught a little reading and writing in their parents' houses, and, beyond this, knowledge is mischievous. It is true, that most of the Missionaries are incapable of communicating further instruction.”*—

Not to notice the singular delusion under which Kotzebue appears to have laboured throughout the whole of this scene, mistaking a worshipping assembly *for a school*,—it is sufficient to observe, that a people who, either occasionally or statedly, meet thus for social worship, and whose proceedings,

* Vol. i. p. 201.

when uninfluenced and unaided by the presence of the Missionary, are distinguished by the order and propriety here exhibited, certainly afford no equivocal evidence of the estimation in which they hold such services, and the regard to which they consider them entitled. Kotzebue's speculations relative to what were the "probable" thoughts of the assembly,—as their truth rests on no other evidence than the surmises of the author, do not demand attention; and few, if any, of his readers will suppose there was any ground for the ungenerous insinuation with which this testimony is accompanied: the facts speak for themselves. And before his readers rely on his assertion, that there are "no schools," and that the children are taught only "a little reading and writing, by their parents at home," they will inquire, How is it, that ability to read and write is "tolerably common among them?" and who enabled these parents, even supposing his assertion were true, to instruct their children in these accomplishments?

Kotzebue, it appears, anchored in Matavai bay on the day which was Saturday on shore. The sails were scarcely furled, before the vessel was "surrounded by the gay and noisy Tahitians," in "numerous boats, filled with merchandise." The ship's deck was "transformed into a busy market," traffic was continued till sunset, when the multitude retired, and no article was stolen. The next day was the Sabbath, and the annexed extracts from the account

of it, given in the New Voyage, will, I feel persuaded, afford to every Christian reader unmingled pleasure, notwithstanding the flippant remarks of our author on the costume, and his endeavours to burlesque the appearance and dress, of the natives. At such a time and place, there are but few strangers, from a civilized and Christian part of the world, whose minds would not have been occupied on very different subjects. His unseasonable attempts at wit, however, leave the facts, and the evidence they supply of the actual state of the people, unimpaired. Having spoken of the circumstances under which the busy traffickers had left the ship on the preceding evening, he proceeds—

“ On the following morning, we were greeted by the sun from a cloudless sky, with a most superb illumination of the country opposite to his rising. The king of day burst upon our sight in all his splendour, arraying the luxuriant landscape of the shore in still more enchanting beauty. Among the thickets of fruit-trees were seen the dwellings of the *happy inhabitants* of this great pleasure-ground, built of bamboos, and covered with large leaves, standing each in its little garden ; but, to our great astonishment, the stillness of death reigned among them ; and even when the sun stood high in the heavens, no one was to be seen.

“ The warm friendships, formed but yesterday, seemed already to have ceased ; *we were quite forgotten*. At length we obtained, from the boat sent off to us at break of day with provisions, an explanation of this enigma. The inhabitants of Tahaiti were celebrating the Sunday, on which account they did not leave their houses, where they lay reading the Bible and howling aloud ; laying aside every species of occupation. they devoted, as they said, the whole day to prayer.

“ I resolved to go ashore, and pay a visit to Mr. Wilson, that I might procure, through his means, a convenient place for our astronomical observations. We landed at the point of the Cape, because the shade of a thick palm-grove there offered us immediate protection. No one received us on the strand ; no human being, not even a dog, was visible. The very birds seemed here to celebrate the Sunday by silence. A little brook, meandering among shrubs and flowers, alone took the liberty of mingling its murmurs with the devotions of the Tahaitians. I sauntered along a narrow, untrodden path, under the shade of palms, bananas, orange and lemon trees, inhaling their fragrance, and delighting in the luxuriance of nature. Though beautiful as this country is, it does not equal Brazil in the variety of its productions, and in the number of its humming-birds and butterflies. The loud prayer of the Tahaitian Christians reached my ears, as I approached their habitations. All the doors were closed, and not even the children allowed to enjoy the beauty of the morning.

“ The small, but pleasant house of the Missionary, built after the European fashion, stands in the midst of a kitchen-garden, richly provided with all kinds of European vegetables.”

Welcomed to the dwelling, and introduced to its inmates, after remaining some time, he observes—

“ It was now church-time, and Wilson requested me to be present at the service—an invitation which I accepted with pleasure. A broad straight path, planted with the cocoa and lofty bread fruit-tree, leads from his house, about a ten minutes’ walk, to the place of worship. The church itself is a handsome building, about twenty fathoms long, and ten broad, constructed of light wood-work adapted to the climate, and whitened on the outside, which gives it a pretty effect among the green shades that surround it. The interior of the church is one large hall, the walls of which are neatly kept ; it is filled with

a number of benches, so placed in long rows that the occupants can have a convenient view of the pulpit in the centre. When we entered, *the church was full, even to crowding*, the men seated on one side, and the women on the other; they almost all had psalm-books lying before them; the most profound stillness reigned in the assembly. Near the pulpit, which Wilson mounted, was placed a bench for Messrs. Bennet and Tyerman, on which I also took my seat.

“ When Wilson first mounted the pulpit, he bent his head forward, and, concealing his face with an open Bible, prayed in silence; the whole congregation immediately imitated him, using their psalm-books instead of Bibles. After this, the appointed psalm was sung. Wilson then read some chapters from the Bible, the congregation kneeling twice during the intervals; the greater part of them appeared very attentive, and the most decorous silence reigned. After the conclusion of the sermon, another psalm was sung, and the service concluded. The display of costume, as the congregation strolled homewards in groups with the greatest self-complacency, through the beautiful broad avenue, their psalm-books under their arms, was still more strikingly ludicrous than in the church. I had by this time, however, lost all inclination to laugh.

“ I had assisted (or been present) at a great religious assembly of the new, devoted, so called, Christian Tahaitians; and the comparison naturally arising in my mind, between what I had seen, and the descriptions of the early travellers, had introduced reflections, which became less and less agreeable in proportion as I acquired a greater insight into the recent history of the island.”*

The importance of this quotation will justify its length. I forbear all comment on the thoughts and “inclination” of the writer on this occasion, as recorded by himself; but cannot refrain from the

* Vol. i. pp. 149—159.

expression of my regret, that it should have occasioned lamentations so distressing. I have no sympathies in common with the man who could retire under such impressions. The *melancholy reflections* which an attendance on the Christian worship of the Tahitians appears uniformly to have produced, (for it is noticed in his departure from their meeting for prayer, as well as from this more public assembly,) manifests a gloomy irreligious feeling, and a misanthropic state of mind, alike opposed to every sentiment of piety, and every emotion of philanthropy. In the scene and the service every thing had combined to excite sacred gratitude and praise. Nature in the works of loveliness around, and revelation in the light and the hopes it had imparted, had combined to raise the mind to a delightful contemplation of the Deity. His taste must be no less perverse than his feelings; for though there was "neither steeple nor clock," and the sound of the church-going bell was unheard, there was all that could fill with complacency the pious heart:—an unbroken stillness, which comported with the morning of the Sabbath-day—a universal cessation from barter and from toil—no idle groups loitering about the public way—no noisy, dirty, ragged children pursuing their games upon the sands, or thronging, with vacant gaze, the path of the strangers. Happy would it be, if all the villages of civilized Europe afforded such grounds of murmuring to Sabbath-breaking travellers!

That “the gay and noisy Tahitians,” who, but a few years before, while ignorant and barbarous idolaters, had been accustomed to revel, within the precincts of their dark Maraes, in obscenities the most brutish, and delight in murders the most horrid, should now have learned, in quietude, cleanliness, and order, to assemble in a building, which their own industry had raised, to worship the living God, is another theme of complaint, which surely never before disturbed a sane understanding. It is true, in their worship, there were “no rites adorned with gold,” no priest arrayed in tawdry vestments, as in the exhibitions occasionally presented to the crew on board the *Predpriatie*, consisting in “the service of the rubric in Slavonic, prayers, lessons, chants, the offering of incense by the priest, who officiated in an embroidered mantle of green, crimson, and gold, and the kissing of the Bible and of the Cross.” But it is clear, from his own statement, that their service was simple and scriptural, and well adapted to assist the worshippers in worshipping Him, who is a spirit, “in spirit and in truth.” “The church was full, even to crowding;” “the most profound stillness reigned in the assembly,” and “the greater part of them appeared very attentive.” All this their visiter beheld; and what was the result? It is impossible without pain to read his declaration:—

“I had by this time lost all inclination *to laugh*; and the *comparison* arising in my mind, *between what I had seen and the description of early travellers*, had introduced reflections,

which became less and less agreeable as I acquired a greater insight into the recent history of the island."

After this, argument is at an end: and on behalf of the ill-treated Missionaries, I cordially thank Captain Kotzebue for having, in these few lines, provided a shield against all the reproach he can cast upon them through his two hundred pages. The man who, after describing such a scene of decorum, and of apparent sincerity in public worship, can record his inward moanings over the abandoned rites of the Maräes of Tahiti, as *contrasted* with what he had witnessed, would, had he lived at the time, have lamented the fall of the orgies of Ephesus and Corinth before the preaching of Paul. This glimpse into the inner chamber of his sentiments will teach his readers to construe, in an inverse sense, his published opinions; and his censures will be felt to be more valuable than his praises. But our obligations to his frankness do not stop here. He proceeds, in another place, to enlighten his readers on the general subject of Missions, by putting the torpor of the Greek church in contrast with the propagating zeal of all other churches, protestant or catholic. Into this topic, whether regarded as matter of fact, or a question of principle, my limits forbid me to follow him. I can only allow myself to meet the pith of his statement, by telling him that, if true, he deprives *his* church of all claim to the title of *Christian*. A church, dead to the spirit of propagating the gospel, given to be "made known to all nations, for the obedience of

faith," has abjured her allegiance to Christ himself, and refused obedience to the last and summary command given as a test of allegiance, and which, till fully accomplished, retains its original force over her in successive generations.

"The Greek church," he observes in another part of his work, "does not make converts by force. Free from fanaticism, she preaches only toleration and love. She does not even admit of persuasion, but trusts wholly to conviction for proselytes, who, when once they enter her communion, will always find her a loving mother. How different has been the conduct both of Catholic priests and Protestant Missionaries !"

But if Kotzebue wished his own conduct to be regarded as exemplifying the genius of his church, he might at once have declared that it admitted the influence of neither *persuasion* nor *example*. It is charitably to be hoped, that his own treatment of the Sabbath is not to be taken as a specimen of the observance of that holy day which the Greek church enjoins, for nothing could exceed the utter disregard of its sacredness manifested by the Russians, both on board and on shore.

It was, by no external sign of veneration, to be distinguished from any other day ; but was, according to the testimony of the deputation, like every other, devoted to dissipation or labour ; and, in violation of the decent regard due to the institutions of the people whose hospitalities he was receiving, while the Tahitians were observing the Sabbath as a day of sacred rest, the

* New Voyage, vol. ii. p. 124.

crew of the *Predpriatie* were employed on shore, cutting down trees for fuel, or pursuing other avocations.

If the degree of attention shewn to social and public worship, and the proper observance of the Lord's day, be an acknowledged criterion of the religion of a community; if whatever is exemplary in personal piety, be connected with such observances, and flourish as these are regarded,—and that such is the fact, appears from the history of every people who have professed Christianity, from the earliest ages to the present day,—then may the Tahitians, even upon the testimony of one of their most hostile accusers, be placed, if not with the highest, yet far above the lowest, in the rank of Christian nations. Among the trammelled votaries of a corrupted faith, where ceremonies and indulgences offer premiums for vice, prayers may be attended, and times and seasons observed; but under such a system of hypocrisy, the restraint imposed will be too irksome, and the requirements too severe, to allow of its being long continued.

The Tahitians, however, have added this test of sincerity to the rest, that they have maintained their consistency, in this respect, ever since they embraced Christianity. This regard to the due observance of the Sabbath in Tahiti, besides, is not confined to the vicinity of the Missionaries, but extends to the inhabitants of the most remote parts of the island. In describing Mr. Hoffman's journey into the interior, Kotzebue states,—

“ The following day being Sunday, Tauru, (whom Kotzebue describes as ‘ a respectable elderly man, ’) immediately on rising, repeated a long prayer, and then read a chapter of the New Testament, of which at least one copy is to be found in every hut. After a good breakfast, Mr. Hoffman wished to proceed ; but his guides were not to be moved, and threats and entreaties were equally unavailing. They assured him, that a continuation of the journey would be a profanation of the Sabbath ; a crime for which they would be *hanged*, should it come to the knowledge of the Missionaries.”

Whilst I have a right to take the tenor of this testimony in further proof and illustration of my plea for the sincerity of the Tahitians, I am sure I need not waste words in rebutting the shameless imputation which it contains against the innocent objects of his splenetic feelings. It must be left to the judgment of the reader, after what he has seen of the fidelity of Kotzebue’s representations, to judge how far it is probable, that *such* a punishment for *such* an offence would be enjoined by the Missionaries, did they even possess the authority to inflict it.

It may further be remarked, that there is a great want of consistency in those feelings, whether of favour or aversion, which spring from passion and prejudice, not from truth. To what proper principle can it be traced, that the same manners, in one people shall be the objects of commendation, and of censure in another ? The religious habits and observances of the descendants of the mutineers, under their leader Adams, in Pitcairn’s Island, have afforded a subject of just praise to various visiters. As Captain Beechey is the most

recent of these, his pleasing account of the first night which he passed on shore, shall describe the religious observances of these islanders. He says,

“ One interruption only disturbed our first sleep ; it was the pleasing melody of the evening hymn, which, after the lights were put out, was chanted by the whole family in the middle of the room. In the morning also we were awake by their morning hymn, and family devotion. The Sabbath-day is devoted entirely to prayer, reading, and serious meditation. I attended their church on this day, and found the service well conducted. The prayers were read by Adams, and the lessons by Buffet; the service being preceded by hymns.” *

In all these, and in other respects, there is a striking resemblance between the inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island and those of Tahiti. The question recurs, from what cause is it, that so high an eulogium is pronounced upon the former, by those who reproach the same conduct in the natives of Tahiti? From what cause is it that we are told, in Kotzebue's account of a visit by a ship that he met, that “ the captain was enchanted with the conduct and character of this amiable people, and ascribed their virtues to the instructions and example of their patriarch?” but that, in noticing the application of Adams to the Missionaries for a successor, he should close with the wish, “ May Adams's paternal government never be exchanged for despotism, nor his practical lessons of piety be forgotten in empty forms of prayer?” The cause exists, not in the difference

* Vol. i. pp. 77 and 89.

Of the two cases; but in the melancholy fact, that there is a certain class of individuals, with whom it is a maxim, as one of them has declared, "to oppose Christian Missionaries wherever they may find them." The sobriety, truth, and chastity of the Pitcairn Islanders cannot be more congenial to the inclinations and principles of these individuals than that inculcated by the Missionaries; but the fact is, that they are regarded as European families, and that they were never known as the objects of unbridled passions. Their present condition is, therefore, contemplated without any feelings of disappointment and vexation. Had it been the result of a *change* from former licentiousness, effected by Christian teachers of any class, they would have equally shared in the misrepresentation of opposers. And there can be no doubt, that, were they, through any dispensation of Providence towards them, to disperse themselves over the pagan isles of the Pacific, and have the honour of producing a *change* in the characters and habits of the inhabitants of those islands, by no other means than those which Adams has employed in forming and maturing their own,—the transformation would be viewed, by future visitors of the same class, as indignantly as that in Tahiti is regarded, and the instruments would be exposed to misrepresentation and abuse not less virulent than that with which the Missionaries have been assailed.

SECTION VIII.

Kotzebue's notice of the Sandwich Islands.—Charges against the Missionaries.—Facts he adduces.—Advancement of education.—Desire after knowledge.—Fidelity of the Missionaries.—Testimonies in favour of Missions.—Impotency of opposition.—Certainty of ultimate success.

ABOUT one hundred and twelve pages of Kotzebue's second volume is occupied with a notice of the Sandwich Islands. As a few days' residence is, with him, all that is needful (notwithstanding he knows not a word of their language) to render him, in his own opinion, historiographer of a country, though it does not possess a single written record, he sets about to furnish an outline of the history, as well as of the prospects, of the nation. His success is such as might be expected: he collects a few facts; but they are so distorted, and mixed up with so much untruth, and accounts of things that had never existed, except in the author's faculty of invention, that, to a reader unacquainted with the real circumstances of the people, they would convey the most ridiculous and erroneous impressions.

In this part of his work, the writer appears more openly the apologist for paganism; speaking with apparent commendation of "the precepts of pure morality interwoven with its ceremonies," and putting into the

mouth of the father of the late king, words which it is not probable he ever uttered, when he makes him say, "I follow the religion of my country, which cannot be a bad one, since it commands me to be just in all my actions." Yet this very chief, of whose justice Kotzebue appears the voluntary panegyrist, about the year 1806, offered three men in sacrifice when his queen was ill, because the priests declared her illness was occasioned by the anger of the gods, and nothing else would remove it.* Ten men were secured, and, had not symptoms of amendment appeared in the queen, would all have been slain.

One of Kotzebue's companions, the naturalist of the party on his former voyage, to the account of which he refers those of his readers who "wish for a further acquaintance with this distinguished sovereign," not only apologizes for the offering of men, but is desirous of justifying the practice. "Human sacrifices," he admits, "take place;" and adds, "but it would be unjust to upbraid the Owhyheians with them. They sacrifice culprits to their gods, as we sacrifice them to justice. Every land has its peculiar customs."

Kotzebue's history of the Islanders, of the abolition of idolatry, and the introduction of Christianity, is nearly as fabulous as his account of king Tajo and the young hero. The remains of Tamehameha he informs his readers, were disposed of according to the *rites* of the *religion* he professed. Of his successor, whom he had described as "dog of all dogs," he

* Memoir of Keopuolani, p. 12.

speaks in no very respectful terms. "He was," he says, "a free-thinker in a bad sense. He hated the religion (idolatry) of his country, and he determined to overthrow it. In the fifth month of his reign, he proceeded in a *violent and brutal manner* to the execution of his design." What follows, is too much like what Kotzebue designates Dr. Scheffer's design in Tauai, to be inflicted on the reader's patience, but no one will be surprised at finding such a writer unfriendly to Christian Missions.

His charges against the American Missionaries are as violent as those brought against their brethren in Tahiti, and equally unfounded. They are, with scarcely any variation, a repetition of such as have been before preferred and refuted; and any points that may require notice, will be satisfactorily met in Mr. Stewart's visit to the Pacific in the years 1829 and 1830, which is now in a course of publication.

Kotzebue's predictions on the South Sea Islands, were couched under the figure of "a cloud in the political horizon," whose enlargement might be slow, and its explosion distant; but in the Sandwich Islands he leads his readers to expect their more speedy fulfilment. This is always dangerous to any one who pretends to predict future events. The following passages exhibit such a mixture of absurdity and ill-will, that it is difficult to say which preponderates. Concerning an old man of seventy, whose attendance at the school and church the queen is said to have insisted upon, Captain Kotzebue writes:—

“ He sought her presence, implored her compassion for his destitute condition, and represented the impossibility of learning to read at his age. But in vain ! The queen replied with an angry gesture, ‘ If you will not learn to read, you may go and drown yourself.’

“ To such tyranny as this has Bingham urged the queen, and perhaps already esteems himself absolute sovereign of these islands. But he reckons without his host. He pulls the cord so tightly, that the bow must break ; and *I forewarn him*, that his authority will, one day, suddenly vanish : already the cloud is gathering ; much discontent exists. The injudicious summons of country-people to Honururo has enhanced the price of provisions ; partly on account of the increased consumption, and partly because so much time spent in study and prayer, leaves but little for the labours of agriculture. Thus will the approaching pressure of want be added to the slavery of the mind, and probably urge the islanders to burst their fetters. I have myself heard many of the Yeris express their displeasure ; and the country-people, who consider Bingham’s religion as the source of all their sufferings, one night set fire to the church : the damage sustained was trifling, and the flames were soon extinguished ; but the incendiaries were not discovered.

“ Karemaku is suffering under a confirmed dropsy”—“ it is impossible he can survive long, and his death will be the signal of a general insurrection, which Bingham’s folly will certainly have accelerated.”

Time, that unsparing castigator of prophetic presumption, has proved the prediction false. The death of Karaimoku has taken place, but no revolution has followed ; education is extending ; and the Missionaries were never more respected than at the present time. It is needless to multiply passages corresponding with the above quotations : Mr. Bingham

and his companions stand upon ground too high, and have too firm a footing in public esteem, to be injured by attacks in which the enmity of the accuser is not more conspicuous than the futility of his charge. And, notwithstanding all the hostility which marks Kotzebue's account, there are observable in it certain prominent facts, which afford the strongest confirmation to the statements of the Missionaries, and the anticipations of their friends. *Education is patronized by the chiefs, and is extending its influence.* On his first visit to the queen, he observes—

“ All the arrangements had a pleasing and elegant appearance. The stairs were occupied from the bottom to the door of the queen's apartments, by children, adults, and even old people, of both sexes, who, under her majesty's own superintendence, were reading from spelling-books, and writing on slates—a spectacle very honourable to her philanthropy. The governor himself had a spelling-book in one hand, and in the other a very ornamental little instrument made of bone, which he used for pointing to the letters. Some of the old people appeared to have joined the assembly rather for example's sake, than for a desire to learn, as they were studying, with an affectation of extreme diligence, books held upside down.

“ Nomahana (Namahana) the queen, spoke with enthusiasm on the subject of writing.”

In describing his first interview with Karaimoku, he observes—

“ He pressed my hand, saying, ‘*I too am a Christian, and can read and write.*’ That a warrior and a statesman should pride himself upon such advantages as these, above all others, *proves the estimation in which they are held.* The Sandwich

Islanders know that *these are the ties which connect them with civilized nations.*

“ And Kaahumanu honoured me several times with visits on board, and condescended to write me a letter, which Marine assured me, contained nothing but expressions so inflated and pompous, that he could not understand, and therefore could not translate them.”

The reader naturally inquires, how it was that Kotzebue's interpreter *knew* the nature of the letter, when he “ *could not understand*” it. It was, however, honest to confess, that he could not, under these circumstances, translate it. If Kotzebue's version be a faithful transcript of Namahana's letter, it would have been quite as well to have ascribed an equal degree of incomprehensibility to its expressions and import.

The advance of education may be inferred from the following paragraph, which is quite in the author's style. The reader will not forget that Kotzebue's delineations are really caricatures:

“ Every street in Hanaruro has more than one school-house. In each of these, about a hundred scholars of both sexes are instructed by a single native teacher, who, standing on a raised platform, names aloud every letter, which is repeated in a scream by the whole assembly. No other sounds are heard in the streets, and the human figure is seldom seen amidst this melancholy *stillness*, except when the scholars, conducted by their teachers, repair to church.”

The desire for instruction is so general, that the author, or his informant, seems to imagine that “ there

will be a famine by and by," and finds it necessary to account for it, by pretending that "a short time before Kotzebue's return, a command had been issued, that all persons who had attained the age of eight years, should be brought to Hanaruro, to be taught reading and writing." The instances adduced to shew the calamity resulting from this law, appear entirely fabulous; and although this statement has gained credit and circulation from some of our reviewers, the truth is, that the cause here assigned for the attention to instruction does not exist: no law, enactment, or command, has ever been made, requiring the people to attend the schools; and by whatever motives they may have been influenced, it has been on their part a voluntary attendance.

But besides this, we learn from our author, that *education has implanted a desire for an increase of knowledge*. This is stated distinctly in the account of one of his interviews with Namahana, where, after mentioning a number of inquiries, Kotzebue proceeds—

"She now overwhelmed me with a host of questions, some of them very absurd, and which, to have answered with methodical precision, would have required *much time and consideration*. I endeavoured to cut the matter as short as possible; and, in order to *divert her thoughts to other subjects, set wine before her*: she liked it very much, and I therefore presented her with a bottle; *but her thirst of knowledge was not to be thus quenched*; and, during a visit of two hours, she asked such incessant questions, that I was not a little relieved when she proposed to depart."

I again thank the author, for having so distinctly told the enemies and the friends of Christianity the result of its introduction to these islands; a more clear and satisfactory illustration of the genuine effects of Missionary labour on the untutored mind, could not be desired. After the foregoing statement, he only exhibits his own inconsistency and disingenuousness, when he charges with holding the opinion, that it is easier to govern an ignorant than an instructed people, the class of men who have produced and nurtured this “*thirst for knowledge.*”

How far the means resorted to, to divert the attention of this ardent inquirer after knowledge, were compatible with humane or moral feeling, the reader will judge. A heart, under the influence of even ordinary benevolence, would have adopted a course very different from that which Kotzebue avows; of whom, it may be remarked, that he no where finds subjects for such unfavourable portraits as he does when he treats his readers with delineations of himself.

On his testimony, we have the satisfaction of knowing, that *the Missionaries are faithful and successful in the discharge of their duties*; that the same means, rightly employed, every where produce the same effects: that the observance of the Sabbath, and of other religious services, is held in general estimation by the people.

“ On Sundays no cooking is permitted, nor must even a fire

be kindled ; nothing, in short, must be done : the whole day is devoted to prayer."

" That Bingham's private views may not be too easily penetrated, religion is made the cloak of all his designs, and *the greatest activity and strictness prevail in its propagation, and in the maintenance of church discipline.* The inhabitants of every house, or hut, in Hanaruro, are compelled, by authority, to an almost endless routine of prayers; and *even the often dishonest intentions of the foreign settlers, must be concealed under the veil of devotion.*"

But this, we have reason to fear, is even complimenting the Missionaries too highly, and rating their success too greatly. Their influence would have been powerful indeed, had it been such as to constrain the " foreign settlers," and still more, the foreign visitors, to assume, on any pretext, "*the veil of devotion,*" were it even to "*conceal under*" it "*intentions*" which Kotzebue has termed "*dishonest.*" But, as yet, no intelligence of such hypocrisy has reached us !

Such is the state of Christianity in the Sandwich and Society Islands, according to the evidence of its enemies ; and I feel persuaded that I might rest the claims of the Missions, at both these groups, to the good opinion and favour of the community, on this evidence alone, without the least apprehension of an unfavourable verdict from an unprejudiced mind. But I now present a selection from the testimonies of more candid reporters. In doing this, I refrain only from making any additional quotations from the ample and satisfactory evidence

Contained in the recently published Journal of Messrs. Tyerman and Bennet, edited by Mr. Montgomery; persuaded that the work itself will be very extensively read, not only by the friends of Missions, but by all interested in the subjects of which it treats.

Some of the letters from the Missionaries at the latter islands, are not less decisive than satisfactory. Of this kind is the following, from Mr. Darling, to one of the directors, dated April, 1829 :—

“ Dear sir,—You will be glad to hear that the work of the Lord still prospers at Tahiti; and although many enemies of the church of Christ here, have risen up, we rejoice to say that the *faith of thousands remains unshaken*; affording many proofs that it is built upon the rock, Christ; and we hence derive assurance that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, but that it shall triumph over all enemies.

“ It is true, there are many here, as there are in all countries, who ‘care for none of these things;’ yet even many of these attend the preaching of the gospel, which encourages us to hope that God, in his own time, will pluck them as brands out of the eternal burning.

“ You would delight to witness our congregations, when assembled to worship ‘the living and true God.’ The number of hearers is great, their attention good, and many note down the heads and particulars, as they fall from the lips of the speaker. At a meeting I have with my people, on the Sabbath evening, a great number will repeat the leading parts of the discourses they have heard in the course of the day, or on the Tuesday evening previous.

“ *The whole of the New Testament is now read, with facility and delight, by many at all the stations.* And, what is better than all, we have had undoubted proofs, that not a few who

have been removed by death, have died in the faith, and are gone to glory; through the blood of God's dear Son, the ever-blessed Redeemer of mankind."

"At Tahiti, the gospel has taken so deep a root, that all that the enemies of the cause may say, can never stop its growth. Let such persons go to the Fejees, to the Navigators' or Marquesas groups of islands, and then they will learn by comparison what the gospel has done for Tahiti.

"It would be found that they could not dare to come to anchor at the former groups, for fear of being cut off, killed, and eaten; while at Tahiti they can anchor where they please, and stay as long as they please, none interrupting them. And, I would ask, what is it that has made the difference? It is the gospel, accompanied by the power of God."

Mr. Orsmond thus describes the state of Huahine, in the summer of 1830 :—

"In the house of God I see, for the most part, a large and attentive congregation, evincing, by their correct scriptural knowledge and decent attire, in European clothing, the advantages of Christianity. In walking through the settlement, I see a good number of comfortable dwelling-houses, a great extent of ground under cultivation, two colonial brigs, (one full of oil and arrow-root, the other nearly full,) and much native produce unsold, together with eight or ten large native-built sloops, and cutters of considerable dimensions. Here I see captains and natives trading in peace on shore.

"Can a man, who is in possession of his right mind, who really knows what the people say and feel, assert that the state of things now is worse than formerly? The natives themselves would shame such a man to contempt.

To all acquainted with Mr. Bennet's character,

and his means of information, the following letter will be satisfactory evidence.

“ Hackney, March 17, 1831.

“ My dear Sir,

“ With this, allow me to hand to you a copy, or rather a translation, of a document, which the present Admiral Duperry (then Captain Duperry, commanding the French corvette *La Coquille*) presented to us, on board his ship, in Matavai bay, May 15th, 1823. The document is an extract from the captain's despatch, which he was then writing to the minister at the head of the marine department in Paris; and breathes a spirit worthy of a gallant commander belonging to so enlightened a nation.

“ In the same year, and in the same bay, Captain Lazaroff, commanding a Russian expedition, also did honour to himself and his country, by the benevolent pleasure he expressed, during his short stay at Tahiti, on seeing the improved condition and manners of these islanders.

“ The captains in general, who visited the islands while we were among them, manifested their surprise and satisfaction at the obvious and great improvements effected by the agency of Missionaries in these regions. The almost solitary exception was the German Captain Kotzebue, who made his second visit to Tahiti while we happened to be there. Certainly the disposition evinced by him differed most widely from that which we had ever witnessed in our other visitors, especially of his rank. The attentions which were paid him (as his own acknowledgments prove) by the natives, the Missionary, and ourselves, were received with a repulsive coldness, which even ordinary courtesy might have served to suppress. Whether this arose from natural moroseness of temper, or from the ill-humour which their adopted religion has had to endure, from some others as well as himself, on account of the restraints it has

imposed on their former licentious habits,—it must be left to the discerners of hearts to determine.

“ I remain, dear sir, yours faithfully,

“ *The Rev. W. Ellis.*

“ GEORGE BENNET.”

The following is the translation of the document mentioned by Mr. Bennet. It is not less honourable to the writer than satisfactory to the friends of the Mission to which it refers. The despatch was dated May 15th, and, by the dates, the reader will perceive that Captain Duperry had been, when he gave his testimony, a longer period at Tahiti, than the whole of Kotzebue's stay.

“ At sun-rise, on the 3d of May, the sky cleared, the black vapours which had bounded the horizon disappeared, and the island of Tahiti suddenly presented itself to our eyes, with the rich and seducing productions which nature has so liberally bestowed upon it. At four o'clock in the evening we anchored in Matavai bay, without having a single invalid on board, notwithstanding the difficult passage we had effected.

“ When Wallis, Bougainville, Cook, and Vancouvre touched at this island, they were boarded by a great number of canoes ; we were, therefore, very much surprised to see none approaching us. We, however, soon learned the reason—every body was at chapel.

“ The next day, the inhabitants, in great numbers, brought us provisions of all kinds. The Missionaries assemble the whole population, consisting of 7000 souls, every year in the church of Papahoa. This meeting was holding at the moment of our arrival. They discussed the articles of a code of laws proposed by the Missionaries, and the Taheitan chiefs mounted the tribune, and spoke for hours with much animation.

“ The state of the island of Tahiti is now very different from what it was in the days of Cook. The Missionaries of the Society of London have entirely changed the manners and customs of the inhabitants. Idolatry exists no longer; they profess generally the Christian religion; the women no longer come on board the vessels, and they are very reserved on all occasions. Their marriages are celebrated in the same manner as in Europe, and the king confines himself to one wife. The women are also admitted to the table with their husbands. The infamous society of the Arreoyoys exists no longer; the bloody wars in which the people engaged, and human sacrifices, have entirely ceased, since 1816. All the natives can read and write, and have religious books translated into their language, printed either at Tahiti, Ulitea,* or Eimeo. They have built considerable churches, where they repair twice in the week, and show the greatest attention to the discourses of the preacher. It is common to see numerous individuals take notes of the most interesting passages of the sermons they hear.”

In a letter recently received from a friend in Russia, the writer says—

“ When Captain Lazaroff returned from his voyage from the Pacific in 1825, I went on board with the English clergyman at Cronstadt. After showing us various curiosities, the captain said, I will show you a greater curiosity than you have yet seen; and produced a part of the New Testament in the Tahitian language. This led to a conversation concerning the Missionaries, and the change which had taken place by the introduction of Christianity among the natives. When he was first there, he found the people were unprincipled, great thieves, and addicted to numerous crimes; but he had now found them quite a changed people: a European could walk unarmed all

* i.e. Raiatea.

over the country, and find friends every where, and a cargo could now be landed on the beach without being pilfered. He knew all the Missionaries well, and spoke of them in terms of the highest praise."

The captain of another Russian vessel, that has visited the island very recently, has also borne the following testimony :—

" I was quite delighted with the pious people who have been converted from idolatry. They bear a *far larger proportion to the inhabitants than can be found in towns and cities in Europe*. What I saw and heard of the Christian devotedness of many of the natives, made me feel that my own religion was of a very low standard. I found, alas ! that all the natives are not followers of Christ; but as it is in Europe, so it is there, many are still following 'divers lusts and pleasures,' particularly among the youthful part of the population. There were several ships lying near the island (one from London, and the rest from other nations) during my visit; but it appears to me, that the generality of sea-faring men *do not like the glorious change* which God has wrought among the natives, through the instrumentality of the Missionaries, and *the reason is obvious*."

This evidence, I believe, is as accurate as it is creditable to the discernment and candour of the individual by whom it is borne; and I only add—that the account refers to the state of the people during the year 1830, the time which the ship, commanded by the captain, visited the island of Tahiti.

Towards the close of 1829, when travelling in Scotland, on behalf of the London Missionary Society, I attended a public meeting at Kelso, to which Sir Thomas Brisbane, late governor of the colony of New South Wales, had been invited. Other engagements

prevented his attending; but he wrote a friendly letter to the excellent clergyman of the place, which was read at the public meeting. The high official station of the writer, when governor of New South Wales, offered many opportunities for receiving, through various channels, correct information on the state of the islands, and the influence of Christianity on their inhabitants. The favourable testimony of one such witness, with such means of knowledge, will, in the judgment of every unprejudiced person, outweigh the cavils and the imputations of a host of such accusers as Kotzebue has unhappily proved himself to be.

In the letter addressed to the clergyman above-mentioned, by whom it was read at the public meeting, Sir Thomas Brisbane, after expressing his regret at being unable to attend, thus writes :—

“ You can, however, declare my favourable opinion, in the strongest terms, of the value I attach to Missionary labours, and the inestimable benefits they have conferred on the vast extent of the population of the Islands of the southern hemisphere.

“ Captain Gambier, of the navy, stated to me, that he had touched at various of those islands, particularly at Otaheite, where he found the savages who had succoured Cook, converted to peaceable Christians.

“ Were it necessary, I could add various other testimonials in behalf of the inestimable blessings the Missionaries have conferred on mankind. I shall therefore conclude, by offering my mite.”

I now introduce a reference to the labours of the Missionaries, and their appeals, of a somewhat

different, though still most interesting and decisive, character. I am not quite certain that I know the individual to whom it relates, though, so far as recollection serves me, I once saw him on board a vessel lying in the harbour at Huahine. With the estimable Clergyman by whom the letter is written, I have the pleasure of a personal acquaintance; and few communications have afforded me more real pleasure. Many instances of equal benefit from the Christian efforts of Missionaries, on behalf of their own countrymen in distant parts, might, I believe, be mentioned; and I cannot but hope that the feelings of the son have continued to be the same as those which dictated the letter to his mother,—and that subsequent tidings, if any have been received, have only added to the joy which such a communication could not fail to give to the heart of a Christian parent; and if they meet not again on earth, may both, through the pardoning mercy of the Redeemer, which may be sought and experienced in every clime, meet each other on the day of judgment, at the right hand of the Son of God, and everlastingly acknowledge the mercy so vouchsafed. The letter requires no explanation:—

“ Rev. and dear Sir,

“ June 1, 1829.

“ I send you a copy of a letter received from a parishioner of mine from her son, who is at Otaheite. I am sure you will be gratified at this unexpected testimony to the beneficial results of Missionary exertions. His view of the gospel shews the purity and simplicity in which it has been preached. The young man left his father's house about eleven years ago, a wild careless

boy; he appears now an humble Christian at the feet of Jesus. The means, under Providence, of his happy change, you evidently see, was his connexion with a pious Missionary family. This, Sir, to me is sufficient encouragement to embrace this interesting cause with energy and zeal. The receipt of this letter has caused a marked sensation in the little village where most of my parishioners are concentrated, and has animated them in the cause of Missions. There is already a branch of the Church Missionary Society formed, and a handsome subscription raised to forward the cause. You may judge the feelings of the poor mother on receiving this letter. She has been bed-ridden for twelve months, in consequence of a paralytic attack; her hopes are fixed on the same Rock as her son's; and though she never expects to see him in this world, she with joy anticipates a happy meeting before the throne of the Lamb; and now, though in pain and distress, 'her soul is magnifying the Lord, and her spirit rejoicing in God her Saviour; that he, whom she considered dead, is alive again; whom she thought lost, is found.'

"I remain, with kind regards,—yours truly,

(Signed)

"J. B. P.

"*To Rev. W. Ellis.*"

With this letter I close the testimonies in favour of the Missions in the South Sea Islands. The evidence of the rapid improvement of the Sandwich Islanders, under the beneficial influence of the Missionaries there, and of the true source of the complaints made against them, is more distinct and full. I shall satisfy myself with selecting the following extracts from an official document, addressed to the Secretary of the Navy of the United States, by Captain Finch, who commanded the American frigate Vincennes, on her late visit to the Sandwich Islands.

The statement to which the intelligent commander has affixed his name, is taken from the account of the voyage published by the chaplain. The vessel remained among the Islands from the 2d of October to the 24th of November, 1829, affording thereby full opportunity for the investigation of the subjects on which Captain Finch has so honourably delivered his testimony:—

“ After an absence of nearly three years from home, on service upon the western coasts of South America, I felt as if on the certain eve of returning thither, as did the ship’s company, whose terms of engagement had expired. The orders to proceed on an extended cruise were therefore unexpected, and most unwelcome. In addition to disappointed hopes, I was little prepared, and far from being desirous of visiting islanders whose moral character was undergoing change, and whose primitive traits were fast disappearing; whether for the better was a problem which I supposed a cursory glance and short survey would not enable me to determine. Again, I felt a reluctance to be placed in circumstances which I foresaw might involve me, as a party, in the various conflicting accounts which had been given to my government and the public, in regard to these people, and was afraid that irregularities amongst our trading or whaling vessels, and collision with the natives, might invite my interference, which, if exerted, yet probably would fall short of the exigencies of the demands. Added to these considerations, I had heard of the hostility which was entertained by almost all foreigners resident at those places, where teachers of the gospel, or Missionaries, had established themselves. I promised myself, on the whole, neither gratification nor usefulness, and therefore undertook the voyage with real regret; but now that it is gotten through with, I feel relieved, and look back rather with surprise, that I engaged in it with apathy, or that I anticipated difficulties,

and a distaste, which I have not, to the extent apprehended, realized.

“ My visit has been performed, without any occurrence other than of a pleasurable kind attending it : my interposition when called for, has been mildly exercised, and availing—the objects of our government, I hope, answered—and the good effects, I fear not, will be understood by any commander who may, hereafter, perform the like routine of duty. My reports collectively to the government will exhibit what I have done, as well as furnish my opinion on many points, and shew the unavoidable (and supposed) defectiveness of the orders and laws under which I had to act. These are lucidly pointed out by my predecessor, Captain Jones, of the Peacock.

“ The very advanced stage of the people of the Sandwich Islands, in the points involving civilization, religion, and learning, is so well established, so generally known and admitted, that I forbore to give statements of them equally minute with those I had made respecting Nukuhiva, Tahiti, and Raiatea. Their civilities, letters of correspondence, and transaction of business with me, place them in a just light, and will enable our government to appreciate and judge them properly, without my saying a word in their favour, beyond the simple declaration, that they are much in advance of the Society Islanders, cheerfully and agreeably enlightened, acquainted limitedly with their own interests, capable of extending them, and sensible of the value of character as a nation. Their indolence of habit, and amiability of disposition, misled the judgment of persons who deny their pretensions to intelligence and capacity for self-management or government. The first being overcome, and their knowledge fully aroused to the advantages which their locality affords, the latter objection will manifest itself to be erroneous. To aid in every way to elevate and instruct them, and increase their self-pride and confidence, ought to be a source of pleasure, as well as the policy of those foreigners who are amongst them ; but such I am satisfied is neither the

design nor practice of those persons : they pursue, on the contrary, a short-sighted course, watchful of their own immediate gains or advantages, apparently regardless and thoughtless of those who are to succeed them, and whose security, comfort, and prosperity, may be increased or diminished, by the judicious or unwise plans they at present or may hereafter adopt. The gentlemen now at the Sandwich Islands forget that the natives are not the same naked, uninstructed creatures which they were when they first went among them ; and in this forgetfulness, intentional or not, it is immaterial, treat them almost precisely as they did formerly, and condemn their pretensions to knowledge and improved condition.* Human nature cannot, nor will the chiefs much longer bear or tolerate such arrogance and injustice.† The more the respectability and importance of the chiefs and people are increased by voluntary and generous attentions from foreigners, the greater will be the security insured to themselves. Why will they continue to enjoy the hospitality of the natives, contract engagements to large amounts with them, with full reliance upon their integrity, and yet treat them in a contumelious manner, or with indifference : such is nevertheless, the inconsistency I observed.

“ I am at a loss to decide wherein the foreign residents have just cause to complain of, or to condemn the government of the Sandwich Islands. They affect to believe, that all its measures are dictated by the Missionaries. I really do not think so : they doubtless, in their station as teachers, have influence ; but I

* “ Probably exception may be fairly made to some persons of the class of foreigners.”

† “ If *personal* profits, in a sphere for general competition, or operations, are to be regarded as exclusive objects, then probably the original condition of the natives was more favourable formerly than now : I hope that I shall not be viewed as disposed to trammel laudable commercial enterprise.”

rather believe, it is confined as closely as is practicable or possible to that relation, and no other : unless it was perceived by them, that the government was about committing an act of indiscretion, or gross blunder, I doubt if their voice would be heard. It is a most lamentable fact, that the dislike of the Missionaries by the foreign residents, has a tendency, as yet, to paralyze the efforts which the natives are so laudably making, to render themselves worthy of the support and confidence of enlightened Christian and other nations ; and this one circumstance will render, for some time to come, the visits by our ships disagreeable to the officers who have to make them. The constant complaining against the Missionaries is irksome in the extreme, and in such contrast with the conduct of the Missionaries themselves, that I could not but remark their circumspection and reserve with admiration : the latter never obtruded upon my attention the grounds or causes they might have to complain ; nor did they advert to the opposition they experienced, unless expressly invited thereto by me.

“ If the understandings of the natives are imposed upon by the religious injunctions of the Missionaries, the evil will ultimately correct itself, by the very tuition which they afford the inhabitants, more certainly and effectually than by the denunciation and declamation of foreigners, who are interested and temporary sojourners, without other than moneyed transactions to engage the confidence of the natives,* whereas the Missionaries have adventured their families among them, and stand pledged as to the issue of their undertaking before, not only the American public, but the world at large.

* “ The Missionaries possibly are too rigidly literal in their interpretation and enforcement of the commandments ; and an error may arise from this source in the formation of provisions for police, or other regulations, by the native government, and in their subsequent administration and fulfilment.”

“ Opposition similar to that now existing against the present Missionaries, would, doubtless, extend to like persons of any other denomination. All of our countrymen do not think alike on the special subject of religion, and in which our government (very wisely and happily) does not interfere; but, all those who visit the islands in the Pacific for trade, will feel, (and rightly, too,) that such order grows out of the establishment of Christianity, in whatever form introduced, as to preclude undue advantages, ensure personal security, and place the Islander on a footing of equality with his fellow-man. Why, it is supposed necessary to retain the Sandwich Islanders in a state of deeper vassalage and subjection to our avarice and caprices, than those of inferior caste to ourselves at home, I am at a loss to determine. If the Islanders are weary of the instruction they receive, or the restraints imposed in receiving it, they have tongues to speak, and hands to use; and judging by the unrestrained life they have heretofore led, it is but fair to infer, that they would speak and act, if causes existed for their doing so. Whilst they court knowledge, why should they be ridiculed in the search of it? Can it be shown that they have misapplied, to the injury of others, the limited acquirements which they do possess; on the contrary, is it not certain that intercourse with some of them has been rendered more easy, and confidence increased by this very circumstance? Are they not truly their own masters on the principle of birth, soil, and action? Where is the right of our merchants then to interfere with them; where is that of the Missionaries? but by the best of all rights, their own invitations;* the Missionaries and families are also probably more

* “ It has been remarked to me, that Christianity was established, or rather idolatry subverted, before the arrival of Missionaries. Granted: has not the arrival of these persons confirmed these measures, and strengthened the natives in their previous convictions?”

than twice as numerous as the mercantile class. If not satisfied, let merchants withdraw themselves; refreshments, &c. can still be had without their agency, as heretofore, by the masters of such vessels as may frequent the Islands. I would ask, if our countrymen arrogate any thing to themselves other than what the laws allow at Hayti? Do they ever openly reflect upon that government? Why will they act differently, require or expect more at the Hawaiian Islands?

“So great was the friendship and correctness of deportment of the chief islanders, that I could scarcely suppose myself to be among a people once and so recently heathen. Variance of language and complexion alone reminded me of it. These views may very widely vary from the opinions of those who have preceded me only a year or two; I can well believe that we do not keep pace (by means of our intercourse) with their improvements. Intervals of three years make wonderful changes, and for the better; careful and recorded observations only will assure us of the reality of them. The present king, as he advances in years, will, I feel pretty well persuaded, be a blessing to his people; his usefulness will, however, depend in a great measure, upon the choice which he may make in a companion of his power, and the cares inseparable. A doubt and difficulty rests upon this interesting point, which cannot too early be removed.

“By the diffusion of knowledge among the islanders at large, I can readily suppose that the influence of the resident whites, and the abject and slavish adulation and distinction heretofore paid to them, have been diminished in some degree.* Will not this circumstance, to a limited extent, serve to explain the sourness and bitterness which the whites cherish, and, on many occasions, display towards the chiefs as well as the Missionaries?

* “A like consequence will eventually ensue to the chiefs, though I think their positions and prerogatives will never be infringed.”

Suppose that undue power is exercised, by either residents, merchants, or Missionaries, over the government of the Sandwich Islands; from which source will either the greatest good or least evil ensue? I certainly think from the Missionaries.

“ It is seriously to be regretted that the Missionary Society, or some liberal-minded and generous gentlemen of wealth, does not establish and maintain at the Sandwich Islands, on an adequate salary, a person of independence of character, and suitable attainments, separate from clerical avocations, merely as an adviser of the chiefs, on the principles of government, jurisprudence, &c. &c.* or, if our government would appoint salaried Consuls, or a Chargé d’Affaires to the islands respectively, restricting them from all participation in business, the desired object might be obtained; but whilst such official personages are still merchants, their influence is comparatively small or nothing with the government; but their own and their patron’s interest necessarily engrossing subjects.

“ The various communications which I bear to my government, will, I trust, awaken its more pointed attention to these islands, and to the Americans who reside in them. The protest of the merchants and traders to the principles contained in the public letter which I delivered will claim notice; it was prepared during my short absence to Hawaii; but in my letter of the 22d November, I had anticipated its point.† I feel constrained to

* “ It would be beneficial also, if the means of subsistence for Missionaries were augmented; which, when done, will enable them, both as to personal and in general respects to appear to more advantage (than they can at present) without any departure from proper sanctity of character. They ought, if possible, to be rendered entirely independent of the natives, or government, until both become more fully sensible of the value of the time, study, and attention, which, as teachers, they bestow in their incalculably important functions.”

† “ Although the letter of protest is dated November 10, I did

utter this opinion, that its arguments are unsound, its language unbecoming and hasty, its inferences unfounded, and its implications ungenerous, and in every respect injudicious. In the same breath, they, the signers, deny the jurisdiction of the government, and yet invoke protection; taunt one department with ignorance; defend the conduct of all classes of persons who have visited the islands; fit a cap to their own head, which probably was not intended for them; speak insultingly of, and denounce Missionaries; unnecessarily allude to the Rev. Mr. Stewart; and insinuate that the Vincennes has done nothing to aid in the saddling a religion on "ignorant and unsuspecting islanders; unmindful of letters of thanks previously tendered me for services affecting their pockets!

Is it not meant by establishing a consulate, that it should receive the control over our citizens within its reach, which the government of the United States indisputably would exercise if these citizens had remained at home. A public functionary openly declares and insists that his own government has control over acts committed at the Sandwich Islands. Our laws have been framed so blindly, or is this construction to be ascribed to the desires or sinister counsels of others? The signers "powerful reasons" for fearing for their "lives and property" are not set forth, and therefore, I think, can only be creatures of their own minds, unaided by facts.* The letter, I conceive, puts more power into the hands of the natives than belongs to them or than they always wielded; there can be no good reasons for objection to a letter coming from the head of any department.

not receive it until the 23d November, subsequent to my communication to the secretary of the navy, advising him of the proceedings and intended further movements."

* "If, as they say, the chiefs have been made fully to understand the letters, then it follows that security must result to every one."

if the president chooses to give such direction to it. I cannot perceive that the letter advocates any particular sect in religion ; nor are the petitioners required, or called upon, to recognize or follow the religion of the Islanders now, more than they were when idolatry existed. In the nature of things, it is impossible that the petitioners can assume a responsibility for the acts or conduct of all citizens who have visited the Islands, or that they can undertake to establish the position, that there never has been violations of the laws, or interference with the government of the Islands.* Surely, the right, on the part of our government, to inquire into the conduct of its own citizens, sojourning temporally abroad, was never until now contested ; and as to the propriety of the governmental letter adverting to the appointment of Mr. Stewart, I humbly conceive that the government was quite as well qualified to judge as the petitioners or protestors.

“ Lest any thing which I have said, may be construed as unduly favouring the Missionaries, I take this occasion to remark, that I am not of their particular church, but am a Protestant Episcopalian ; so that I am under no bias on that score.† The exalted character and professional rank of the writer of the document from which these paragraphs are taken, and the high authorities to which it was originally addressed, stamp a value on the testimony, that my readers will readily appreciate.

That the Missions in the South Seas and Sandwich Islands, should be assailed in the manner in which they have been by the Author of the New Voyage, cannot be a matter of surprise to those who are acquainted with human nature, and the common

* “ Probably these matters come not within the scope of the gentlemen’s notice, or were not thought of before.”

† “ There can be no doubt, that an American interest and influence is insensibly produced by benefits derived from the Missionaries as American citizens.”

springs of human action. Were all who witness their results, influenced by the motives, and governed, in their intercourse with the people, by the principles of Christianity, it would be otherwise. But, it is felt by the larger portion of such visiters, that the state of things among the truly Christian part of the community presents, unhappily for themselves, a practical condemnation of their own principles and deportment. Others, indeed, and we trust the number will increase, whom commerce or science have led to their shores, have been men of a different character. By such, truth has been protected, and virtue encouraged. Instead of endeavouring to weaken the respect publicly paid to the ordinances of religion, they have hailed as a privilege the opportunity of uniting with a Christian assembly, in worshipping the God of their fathers, in a heretofore pagan land. The *natives* themselves are too good judges of men, not to draw the proper distinction between these classes of foreigners.

But instead of permanently injuring the cause of Missions, such attempts to depreciate its influence, as those made in the New Voyage, will ultimately tend to promote it. They disclose so fully the character of the parties by whom the charges are brought, and indicate so strongly the hostility by which they are actuated, that they carry with them their own antidote.—The friends of Missions, finding that the evils laid to their account, so far as they are founded, are to be traced to causes which the Missionaries have

assiduously laboured to counteract, and often to the acts of the very persons by whom they have been reproached, or that their strongest accusations are the mere fabrications of their own malice—will feel their confidence confirmed in the individuals who, under God, have been instrumental in conducting them.

The warmest advocates of the South Sea Missions are ready to acknowledge, that the work is still imperfect; that much evil is yet to be corrected, and all that is good still needs improvement. But is it thence disingenuously to be denied that solid good has been done, in which the philanthropist and the Christian may justly rejoice; or is it shamelessly to be affirmed, that the evil, which still exists, outweighs the good? Can it be wondered at, if, before indolence and other propensities, inwrought with their very nature, and matured by the unrestrained growth of ages, be entirely eradicated; if, as yet, the leaven of the gospel has not leavened the mass of the population; so that, many are found who make no profession of Christianity, or, amongst those who do, numbers are Christians only in name, and even by their conduct dishonour that name? Who that is at all acquainted with the progress of the gospel in past ages, or amongst any portion of mankind, could expect it to be otherwise? How little are the cavillers against the South Sea Missions aware that, on such grounds, they are merely disclosing their own ignorance, or their prejudices! Let only the facts be assumed, which may be drawn

from the reluctant admissions of those who thus misrepresent this, which may be called an infant-race of Christians—let these be contrasted with the records of their former state, which cannot be erased from the pages of Wallis, Forster, Cook, and other voyagers—let a comparison of the behaviour of these two conditions be drawn, in due regard to the *shortness of the period* during which the gospel has had an acknowledged influence amongst them—and then let the voice of truth declare, whether the records of history contain an instance of greater or of equal advances, in religious, moral, and social improvement, made by any people whose name is to be found in its annals. Till this is done, to the disadvantage of these humble fellow-claimants of the Christian name, it will not be too much to ask, on their behalf, of my generous countrymen, that they will not form an estimate of their character upon the reports of incompetent and prejudiced observers, such as the author of the *New Voyage*.

How opposite are the effects produced on different minds by the same causes! Several individuals who have visited the South Sea Islands, under impressions corresponding with those of Captain Kotzebue, have been convinced by what they saw, that Christianity was not a fiction, but a system of vitality and power; have been led to seek, and are now grateful to have shared, its blessings, and to be cheered by its hopes. Sincerely hoping, and earnestly praying, that this may become

his final happiness, I shall take my leave of the writer of the work, which has, most reluctantly on my part, called forth the preceding animadversions.

It is not to be doubted that, while the Missionaries and their converts have been made the direct objects of the ill-will of the Captain and his abettors, it is no small part of their design to cast discredit on the cause of Missions in general, and the Societies by which they are conducted. If stubborn facts will not permit a man totally to deny the claims to success, he endeavours to persuade the world that the statements are exaggerated, and that so far as true, the results are beneath the expectations which might have been formed.

On behalf of the Society to which I am attached, it may be sufficient for me to say, that however common it has been with objectors to Missions, to represent them as the products of enthusiasm—neither the directors, nor the members of the London Missionary Society, are such enthusiasts as to expect miracles. We treat those to whom we send the gospel, as God has treated mankind at large. It is carried to them, and proposed to their understandings, as accountable creatures, accompanied with the declaration sanctioned by Divine authority — “He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned.” This gospel is not only preached, but it is translated into their own language, and they themselves are taught to read it. As in every preceding instance, some have believed, yea many,

and some have believed not. Those who have received it in truth, have evinced their sincerity, by renouncing dumb idols and their worship, and turning to the living God. As to the extent to which this is done, it has been such as appears to afford, in a signal degree, a proof of God's approbation of their intentions, and of his sanction to the means employed. It has been such as causes the friends of Missions greatly to rejoice, in the face of all the objections which have been brought, and the calumnies which have been uttered against their labours. Nor shall even the opposition which they have encountered, be without beneficial effects. The very objections will lead the conductors of these benevolent undertakings to superintend their progress with increased care; and, it is hoped, that the conviction of the fallacy of such objections will excite their supporters to sustain them with increasing zeal. These calumnies will, besides, become known, partially at least, to the natives themselves; and it may be anticipated, that while they will feel justly indignant at such unworthy and ungenerous attempts to degrade them in the eyes of their more favoured fellow Christians, in enlightened Europe, they will extract good from the intended evil, and perceive and guard the points on which they may at present be assailed by the shafts of malevolence.

It may further be hoped, that the evidence in favour of missions, which has been called forth, will meet the eye of many who may not have seen the previous

accounts of the progress of these Missions, and lead to the conviction, as has not unfrequently been the case, that the charges so industriously circulated against them are unfounded ; and that these efforts of Christian zeal are entitled to the sanction and support of themselves, and of all who claim to be regarded as the followers of Him, whose last injunction was—
“ Go teach all nations.”

A P P E N D I X.

SINCE the appearance of Kotzebue's work, Captain F. W. Beechey, R. N. has published his "Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Beering's Straits," in the course of which he visited Tahiti and the Sandwich Islands very shortly after Kotzebue had left them. A few passages in the "Narrative" of Capt. Beechey, which have been made—contrary, no doubt, to his intention—the ground of unfair and injurious misrepresentations in some of our own periodical publications, require to be noticed, in a contemporary vindication of the Missions to which they refer.

The high professional reputation which Captain Beechey enjoys, the general candour which pervades his work, and the approbation which he occasionally bestows on the Missionaries and their labours, all tend to add weight to his opinions, and render it the more important that the misapprehensions into which he has fallen should not, by passing unnoticed, give an erroneous bias to public opinion.

In his first volume, p. 197, where the Captain does me the honour to notice, with qualified commendation, my *Polynesian Researches*, he concludes by observing—

“ But complete as that work is, in many respects, it is nevertheless deficient in some essential points. The author, with a commendable feeling of charity, consonant with his profession, has, by his own admission, in the account of the biography of Pomarree, glossed over the failings, and dwelt upon the better qualities, of the subject of his memoir; and, pursuing the same course throughout, he has impressed the reader with a more elevated idea of their moral condition, and with a higher opinion of the degree of civilization to which they have attained, than they deserve, or, at least, than the facts which came under our observation authorise. There seems to be no doubt that he has drawn the picture, generally, as it was presented to him; but he has unconsciously fallen into an error almost inseparable from a person of his profession, who, when mixing with society, finds it under that restraint, which respect for his sacred office, and veneration for his character, create. As in our intercourse with these people, they acted more from the impulse of their natural feelings, and expressed their opinions with greater freedom, we were more likely to obtain a correct knowledge of their real disposition and habits.”

That a different class of persons from those who were the most forward to press themselves upon the notice of Captain Beechey, should be the ordinary associates of the Missionaries, is readily to be believed, and easily to be accounted for. But, allowing the possibility of his theory, that the Missionaries drew their conclusions from too narrow a field of observation, it is obvious that he has had a still more contracted

scope, and far fewer means for correcting partial impressions, than the Missionaries enjoyed. Beside this, another important advantage for correct judgment was on the side of the Missionaries. They possessed a perfect knowledge of the medium of communication with the natives, while he could only derive his information from an interpreter, to whom, at least, one of the languages employed must have been very inadequately known. That the informant has, from whatever cause, misled the Captain not a little on some points, is pretty evident, from his having been induced to believe that the natives had ever supposed "King George" was a "Missionary," and that the officers of the Blossom "belonged" to the Missionary Society.

Justice to the character of the natives requires that I should further state, that, even when he seems to report the results of his own observations, he has done it on very defective evidence, and limited means of knowledge. Thus, in giving his opinion on a subject requiring, if any one does, caution in forming it, he inconsiderately observes—"Notwithstanding all the restrictions imposed, I do not believe that I should exceed the bounds of truth in saying, that if opportunity offered, there is no favour which might not be obtained from the females of Tahiti for the trifling consideration of a Jew's-harp, a ring, or some other bauble."

I have no hesitation in stating my own conviction, that his sense of justice would not have permitted

Captain Beechey to pass so sweeping and indefensible a judgment against the virtue of the female population of the island, had his means of evidence been more extended and better chosen. He has fallen into error, in this respect, by grounding his general opinion on that portion of female society only, from which no nation in the world would consent that an estimate of their character should be drawn. I can assure him, that, from the cause which I have already pointed out, when he left the island, the largest and best portion of the female population had not been seen by himself, any more than by Captain Kotzebue. It is, indeed, greatly to be lamented, that so much injury should be unconsciously done to the character of a whole people, by those whose better feelings would lead them to abhor the injustice which so serious a crimination involves.

The profligacy of the queen and other members of the royal family has been adduced as proof of the general moral state of the christianized Tahitians. But such representations are as unfounded as they are injurious. Until some time after Pomare's death, the female branches of the reigning family not only professed religion, but acted, in every respect, according to its precepts, so that several were received to the privileges of Christian fellowship; but when, through their intercourse with dissolute foreigners, their deportment became contrary to virtue, the Missionaries, regarding the honour and purity of Christianity as more important than the favour of

the rulers, proceeded, with all possible regard to the station and dignity of the parties, to exclude them from the communion of the church. Since that period, though every suitable attention has been shewn to them in their exalted civil rank in the nation, no mention has been made of them as *Christians*: and although invited to attend the means of religious instruction, in the hope that it might effect their return to propriety of deportment, they have been totally unconnected with the Christian church in any of the islands. Their immorality has caused the greatest sorrow to the Missionaries, whose endeavours to effect their restoration to virtue have been unremitted, and whose honourable conduct in removing them from the church so soon as it was discovered that they were unfit for its communion, might at least have prevented the failings of the offending party from being used to their disadvantage. And it may be inquired, what church in Europe can present an equal instance of honest regard to scriptural precept, and uncompromising adherence to the obligation of preserving the purity of its sacred fellowship?

We need not go to the South Sea Islands, to learn the degree of influence which a profligate court is capable of exerting over those who are exposed to it. But it ought not to be overlooked, that, while the proximity of the queen's habitation to the anchorage of Captain Beechey's vessel, and the intercourse thereby afforded, gave him ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with the manners of its inmates,

it is evident, from his statements, that he saw little, *if any thing*, of that part of the female community which the Missionaries denominate *Christian*. It is easy, therefore, to account for the opinion which Captain Beechey has formed, but not equally so to justify him in taking so unfair a specimen, as the ground of the cruel aspersion which he has ventured to cast on the female population of the island at large.

In the notice of the Polynesian Researches, it is further stated, that the author had, "by his own admission, glossed over the failings" of Pomare, "and dwelt upon the better qualities of the subject of his memoir." A reference to the passage as it stands in my work, will best shew how far I have merited such an imputation. In the second volume of that work, having extended the notice of the leading acts of Pomare's reign down to the promulgation of the laws in 1829, it is observed—

"During the latter part of his life, his conduct was in many respects exceptionable, and his character appeared less amiable than it had done before. He had shewn his weakness in allowing the unfounded representations of a transient visiter, to induce him to request that the manufacture of sugar might not be extensively carried on,"

lest it should invite foreign invaders to the islands. His unjust proceedings, as the principal factor in the island, are then spoken of, and it is further stated—

"The *habits* of intemperance which Pomare was led to indulge, in consequence of these associations, threw a stain

upon his character, and cast a gloom over his mind, from which he never recovered ; and, under the cloud thus induced, he ended his days. He was also reported to be addicted to other vices ; but it is not my object to exhibit the dark features of his character—truth and impartiality require what has been said, and it is with far greater pleasure,” &c.

Here is certainly no “admission” of having glossed over his failings ; every vice to which I knew him to be addicted I have distinctly exhibited, and, with regard to those of which I had only heard vague reports, I felt it would be unjust to his memory to lay them to his charge. I am not aware that the most rigorous impartiality could require more.

I have been more particular in noticing this statement than it may at first appear to require, because it is made a kind of test of the credit due to the general account of the South Sea Islands ; for, after the intimation that the writer of *Polynesian Researches* had glossed over the failings of Pomare, Captain Beechey continues—“and *pursuing the same course throughout*, he has impressed the reader,” &c. This is, to say the least, uncandid ; for, had the writer even admitted that the failings of Pomare had been glossed over, it would have furnished no foundation for Captain Beechey’s assumption, that the same course had been pursued throughout. This criticism must, therefore, be regarded as resting solely on the *inference* of the gentleman by whom it was written.

While Captain Beechey professes to have made himself acquainted, in some considerable degree, with

recent events in Tahiti, it is to be regretted that he did not extend his inquiries further. This would have precluded several passages that now appear in his work, which, I feel persuaded, will not, on better information, increase even his own estimation of its accuracy.

Of this kind is the following, in which, having spoken of the evils that would arise from the backwardness of the natives to avail themselves of the capabilities of the country, and to cultivate the products of the soil, &c. he observes—"It seemed as if the people had never had these things revealed to them, or had sunk into apathy, and were discouraged," &c. Now, Captain Beechey might, with the greatest facility, either while on the spot, or since his return, have obtained such information as would have shewn the unfairness of this censure in its application to the people themselves, and especially to the Missionaries. The efforts to introduce the manufacture of sugar in 1818, and of cotton, &c. in 1821, of the culture of coffee, &c. with the actual progress of the people in mechanical attainments, shew that to the Missionaries and their supporters the remarks are inapplicable.

I am sorry to have to remark, that Capt. Beechey seems to have adopted, no doubt from a too great confidence in the sources of his information, the common-place charge brought against the Mission relative to the discontinuance of the amusements connected with the abolished idolatry, as he remarks—

“ I cannot avoid repeating my conviction, that, had the advisers of Pomare limited the penal code at first, and extended it as it became familiar to the people ; had they restricted instead of suppressed the amusements of the people,” &c.

Captain Beechey tells us, he had also heard this latter opinion “ frequently expressed” before ; and this, I have no doubt, was the cause of his mistake. The fact actually *was* as he seems to think it *ought* to have been, that the penal code was at first exceedingly limited. And, as he has been thus mistaken in what has furnished the foundation of his remarks, his conclusions are, consequently, groundless. The code enacted in 1819 contains not even an allusion to these amusements. This would have been quite superfluous, as there was no individual at that time who had not voluntarily abandoned them.

When the natives, in 1815, renounced idolatry, and professed Christianity, their own convictions of the immorality of these amusements, and their intimate connexion with paganism, led to their universal discontinuance. I never could learn that, after the reception of Christianity, the Missionaries found it necessary to dissuade their converts from performing their former dances, any more than to keep them back from idol-worship. Their partial revival since that time is but part of a plan, resolutely pursued by some ill-disposed foreigners, for the purpose of diverting the natives from the instructions of the Missionaries, and destroying that influence which the precepts of religion appeared to produce. The same parties who

have striven to drug the people with rum, have, with entire consistency of principle, been loudest in denouncing the suppression of these vicious indulgences, and in representing, as one means of embarking public opinion in their favour, the indolence of the natives as the effect of the austerity of the Missionaries in their prohibition. Against such sources of information, it would have been well if Captain Beechey had been more on his guard. During the period of my residence in the islands, I believe there was scarcely a remnant to be found of those ancient lascivious dances in any island; certainly there was not in those on which I resided. But, on account of attempts to restore them, and the partial success which attended these efforts, and the foreign patronage which they received, an enactment was, in 1826, added to the laws, for the purpose of preventing their extension.

It is distressing to my own mind, to behold any member of a Christian country, an advocate for these amusements. I am certain it must result from ignorance. It ought to be the effort of every friend of religion and virtue, to erase even the memory of them; for, to say nothing of their idolatry, the scenes of iniquity with which they almost invariably closed, were such as forbid description. For the truth of this, I would appeal to the unbiassed testimony of any native in the whole group of islands. I cannot desire a stronger confirmation of their licentiousness than Capt. Beechey's volumes contain, in the practical

comment on their character, which is offered by their entire abolition from the pastimes of the Pitcairn islanders, and their extreme unwillingness to engage in them, although urgently solicited by those whom they were certainly disposed to oblige. On this subject, Captain Beechey observes—

“The dance is a recreation very rarely indulged in; but as we particularly requested it, they would not refuse to gratify us.” [Having described the rude instruments and music, he proceeds]—“To this exhilarating music three *grown-up* females stood up to dance, but with a *reluctance which shewed it was done only to oblige us*, as they consider such performances an inroad upon their usual *innocent* pastimes. The figure consisted of such parts of the *Otaheitan dance* as were thought *most* decorous. They did not long continue their diversions, from an idea that it was too great a levity to be continued long; and only the three before-mentioned ladies could be prevailed upon to exhibit their skill. One of our officers, with a view to contribute to the mirth of the colonists, had obligingly brought his violin on shore; and, as an inducement to them to dance again, offered to play some country-dances and reels, if they would proceed; *but they could not be tempted to do so*. They, however, solicited a specimen of the capabilities of the instrument—which was granted; and though very well executed, did not give the satisfaction which we anticipated.”*

There must have been something more than ordinarily offensive to their own sense of modesty and propriety, to have induced these people, not only habitually to have abandoned the recreations to which, so far as the Tahitians were concerned, they had been trained in early life, but to decline the exhibition of even the “*most decorous*” parts of the

* Beechey's Voy. vol. i. p. 82.

dances, in the circumstances under which the solicitations were made.

Captain Beechey thus winds up the view he has attempted to give of the Tahitians :—

“ If I have portrayed their errors more minutely than their virtues, it has been done with a view to shew, that, although the condition of the people *is much improved*, they are not blessed with that state of innocence and domestic comfort of which we have read.”

Without seeking to diminish the degree of credit due to the professions of impartiality with which many of Captain Beechey's remarks are accompanied, I cannot but regret that it has not been equally extended to all the topics embraced in his account. From the intimation given in the last-quoted paragraph, that he has “ portrayed their errors more minutely than their virtues,” the reader will make a suitable inference ; and it will appear besides, from a reference to other subjects, that the substance as well as the tone of his conclusions are not always warranted by the premises from which they are drawn. I know not where he may have “ read” of the “ state of innocence” to which he refers ; but I can assure him, that the only application which the Missionaries ever make of those terms to any portion of the human species in the present world, is to our first parents when in paradise.

I wish I could congratulate Captain Beechey on having been more fortunate in the sources of his information, on his second visit to the Sandwich

Islands, when he speaks of the disastrous consequences resulting from the demand made on the time of the natives by the Missionaries, and states, that "the chiefs lost their influence—the subjects neglected their work;" and tells us of the ridicule of the Missionaries, and opposition to their plans, manifested by Boki and others, &c. I can readily believe that Captain Beechey was told all this, and a great deal more. But surprise mingles with regret, that he should have been so far imposed upon, as to make the pages of his book the record of what his better judgment might have convinced him was too childish to be seriously believed; such as the statement that the young king's trappings, viz. the "sword and feather belonging to the uniform presented to him, from this country, by Lord Byron," had been prohibited by his preceptor, under the impression that it might excite his vanity; and that his (viz. the young king's) riding, bathing, and other exercises, had been restricted. Had Capt. Beechey extended his inquiries a little further, he would easily have learned that these were not facts; and that attendance at the schools had never been other than voluntary on the part of the natives.

But the communications made to Captain Beechey, of the effects of the influence of the Missionaries, in the alleged neglect of cultivation and diminished authority of the chiefs—and the statements contained in a certain *letter* from the Sandwich Islands, to which the forged signature of Boki was attached—resemble each other

so strongly, in many respects, as to force on the mind the conviction that both sprang from one source. Most readers will recollect, that the editor of a leading literary journal, in this country, was so far imposed upon by the speciousness of this letter, as not only to give it circulation, but to "pledge" himself "for its genuineness." I received a letter from Boki, in the native language, about the same time; and when I wrote a reply, I sent out to the Missionaries the Review, containing what had been published here as his letter, requesting that I might be informed whether he had either written or signed it; and though his probable melancholy fate will prevent my receiving his own reply, the annexed extract from the monthly publication of the American Missionary Society,* will shew that I had not misjudged in pronouncing, that the letter was a forgery:—"When the letter reached the Sandwich Islands from England, it was shewn to Boki by the Missionaries, and *he was unable to read it*. They made, therefore, a translation of it into his native tongue, and Boki, after having perused it, appended a certificate, in which he affirmed that the letter was none of his. This translation, with the original certificate, written by Boki in the Hawaiian language, is now at the Missionary rooms." It cannot but give the editor of the Quarterly Review satisfaction, to learn that the state of things in the Sandwich Islands was not such as that letter, if authentic, would have led his readers to suppose;

* Missionary Herald, April, 1831.

and it must occasion him regret, that he should inadvertently have aided in its circulation.

The narrative of the Blossom's voyage is noticed in the last number of the Quarterly Review. In that part of the article referring to Tahiti, the reviewer evinces his critical displeasure against the Missionaries, for spelling the names of the principal islands, in the Society and Sandwich groups, as they are pronounced by the natives, and for not adhering to the orthography employed by the editors of Cook's Voyages. This is of slight moment, farther than it indicates a desire, on the part of the writer, to seize every occasion for casting blame on the Missionaries, and lowering them in the esteem of the world. Writers upon other countries, as the reviewer cannot but be aware, have thought it commendable to prefer accuracy to unfounded prescription, in such matters; were it even true that, in reference to these islands, the names "are as firmly fixed in the English tongue as those of Rome, or Naples, or Lisbon." The authority of the natives ought surely to have some weight in adjusting such a question.

How difficult it is for foreigners, hurrying over the countries they visit, to acquire a correct acquaintance with the sounds and import of words so dissimilar to their own, needs no illustration. Speaking of the chief magistrate, Captain Beechey calls him *aava rai*, and would probably be surprised to learn, that *aava* means *very sour*, and *rai*, *heaven*, or *sky*; so that these two words, instead of meaning chief judge,

have no other signification in Tahitian than the incongruous compound, as so applied, of *very sour sky*.—I will pursue these remarks no further. No blame attaches to Captain Beechey for mistaking these terms; he, doubtless, thought he might rely on the parties from whom he received them; but they are sufficient to shew the blunders which it is scarcely possible to avoid, under the disadvantages to which such transient visitors are exposed. The misfortune is, that so much more credit should be attached to their hasty effusions, than they are really entitled to.

I should feel happy, if with these remarks my unenviable task were brought to a close. But I cannot suffer to pass, without some notice, an article in the *Edinburgh Review* for March, of which the work of Captain Beechey has furnished the occasion; and which may truly be said to be the limbo of all the calumnies cast upon the South Sea Missions, by their most inveterate enemies. It is due to Capt. Beechey to observe, that it is not to be inferred that the representations of the reviewer, though placed in so near a connexion with his work, are supported by his authority. The writer of the article, indeed, quotes a passage which the Captain has too inconsiderately penned; but he must bear alone the responsibility of all the gross violations of justice which the comment contains. These are so very evident, that, as in many other cases of a similar kind, the slander corrects itself. What but a feeling of an infatuated animosity could lead

any writer of the present day to tell the British public, that the inhabitants of Tahiti are still "*as much savages and barbarians as ever*, or rather that they are worse"—"that the only effect of the change produced amongst them has been to *degrade Christianity to the level of the most brutish idolatry*, without making one step towards raising these miserable idolaters to the rank of Christians"—that "*drunkenness is universal*"—that "*Otaheite, in fact, may be described as one vast brothel*"—with many other imputations, as opposed to truth as they are to benevolence.

To follow the writer through these assertions, distinctly, would be to travel again over the whole ground which I have trodden in the preceding pages. I shall content myself with asking him, in reference to one of his assertions, if he has never heard that the knowledge of *reading* is possessed by the majority of the population, and that the New Testament is translated and widely circulated amongst the people? If he has read of these effects of Missionary labour, to say nothing of others, will he, in the face of such facts, declare that the Tahitians have not made "*one step towards raising*" themselves "*to the rank of Christians?*" Or is *reading*, in the opinion of his school, one of the "*vices*" which the natives have borrowed from civilization, by which it is dishonoured? As to the rest of his charges, if the reader is satisfied with the testimonies which I have

adduced from Captain Beechey himself, and others, who can be suspected of no partiality towards the natives, I am confident that I have thrown over the character of the Christian portion of the community, a protection from which the envenomed shafts of the reviewer will rebound upon himself.

In taking my leave of these critical opponents of the Missions, I cannot but remark, that it is not very flattering to the pride of this world's philosophy, to see those who hold themselves up as the correctors and reformers of mankind, persecuting, with their enmity, the humble attempts of a body of Christians to ameliorate the state of a neglected portion of their fellow-men, by means of that gospel which its divine Author designed for "the healing of the nations."

But the friends of Missions need not be surprised, and have no reason to be dismayed, by such opposition. It was equally shewn against the kindred measure of circulating the Scriptures in India, and other idolatrous countries, through the medium of the British and Foreign Bible Society. And what has been the result? It has more strongly convinced the friends of the measure, of the goodness of their cause, and roused them to support it; and it has *persecuted* the Society itself into a greater degree of the approbation and support of the public, than, without their aid, it would have attained. So let them, if they will, continue to befriend, by their enmity, the Societies for

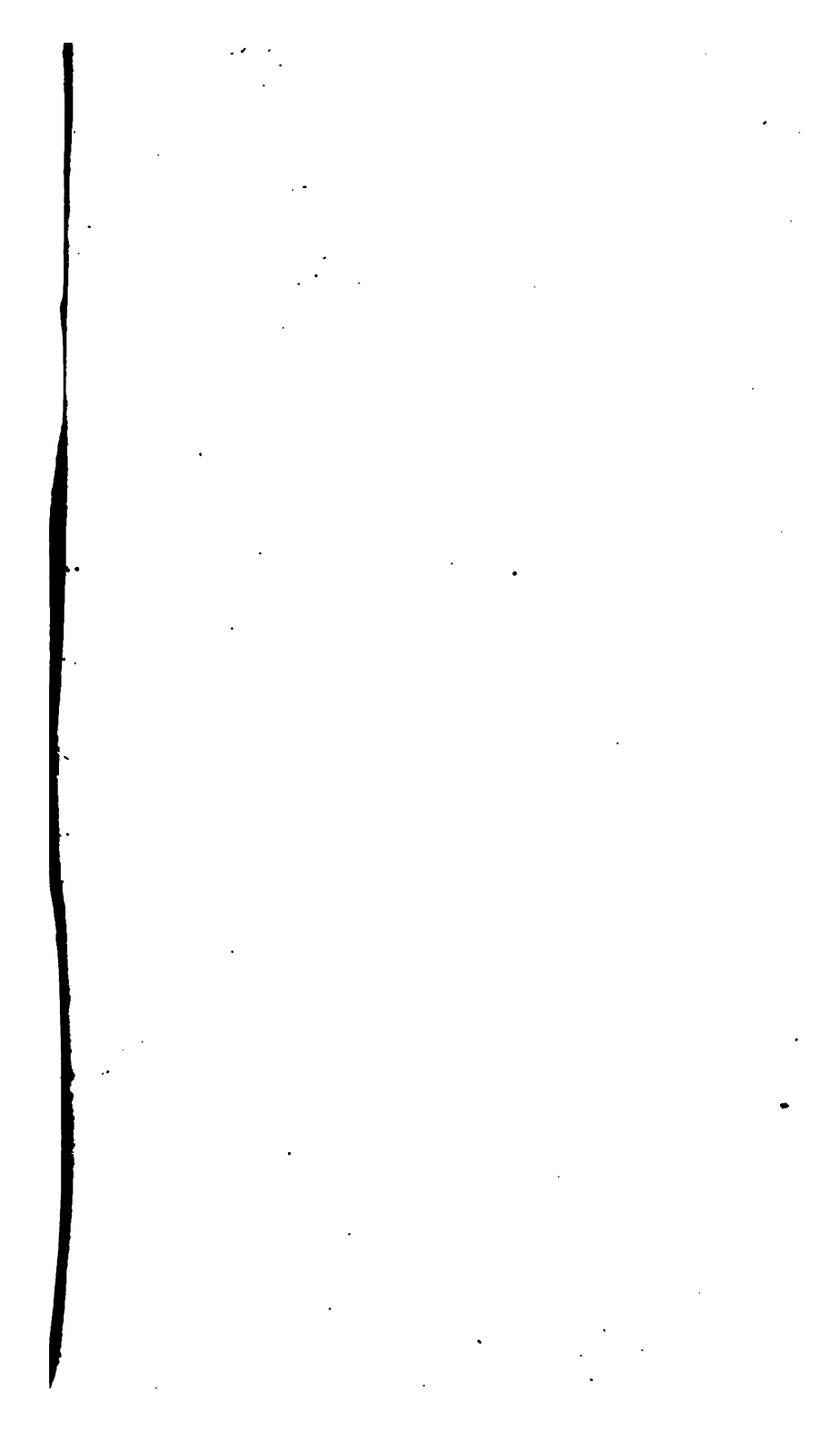
conducting Christian Missions ; which will outlive their wrath, and be cherished in the grateful memory of mankind, as the benefactors of their race, when the futilities of their criminators shall be found only among the mouldering records of human folly and presumption.

THE END.

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